

July 2025

# Liverpool Law

Liverpool  Law Society

THE MAGAZINE FOR THE LEGAL SECTOR IN  
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## ***Legends of the Green...***



## **Liverpool Law Society's 2025 Golf Tournament** p.30





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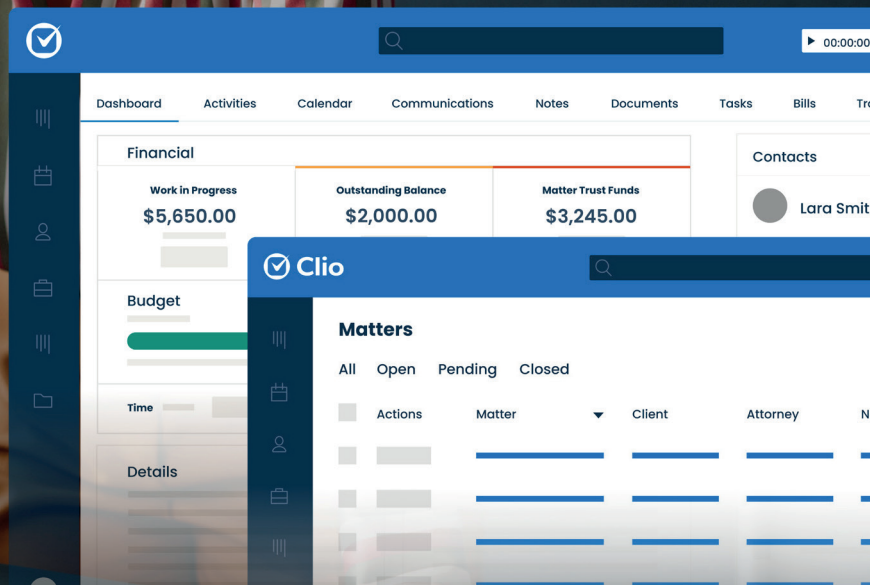


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# July 2025

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## DEADLINES

August 2025 edition: Tue, 22.07.25  
 September 2025 edition: Fri, 22.08.25  
 October 2025 edition: Tue, 23.09.25  
 November 2025 edition: Tue, 21.10.25  
 December 2025 edition: Tue, 25.11.25

### 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



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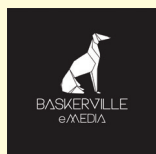
Liverpool Law Society Magazine is produced by and for Liverpool Law Society Members. This is our opportunity to share our news, events and celebrations with our friends in the legal community.

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](mailto:editor@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk)

Photographs should be provided in the highest resolution possible to ensure a good reproduction. Photographs must not be subject to copyright.

The views and opinions expressed in Liverpool Law are those of the individual contributed and not those of the Liverpool Law Society.

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#### Editorial Committee Dates 2025

Meetings start at 01.00 pm.  
except where noted

Tue, 15 Jul 25  
Tue, 19 Aug 25  
Tue, 16 Sep 25 at 11am  
Wed, 15 Oct 25  
Tue, 18 Nov 25

## Welcome to the July edition of Liverpool Law



It has been a busy time at Liverpool Law Society and there are a number of articles for you to enjoy. Notably the celebrations of 200 years of The Law Society and the events held in Liverpool and a great opportunity for us to showcase our amazing City. Our own 200 year celebrations will be taking place in 2027 and plans are being put in place already so please share with us any ideas you may have.

My special congratulations this month to my colleague and good friend **Cat Wolfenden** on her promotion to Equity Partner at Weightmans. I've worked alongside Cat since my days as a paralegal and she has always been a great supporter of mine, giving a confidence boost when coming back from maternity leave and when applying for promotion. She is a great ally of LLS and has spoken at many of our events over the years. As our Past President **Alison Lobb** mentions in the magazine we are very fortunate in our legal community to have many amazing female leaders and Cat is certainly up there amongst them.

School holidays are nearly here and I hope you have some nice plans in place to look forward to and a chance to rest and recharge.

As always if you have anything you would like to include in the magazine please send this across to us in good time to [editor@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk](mailto:editor@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk) and if you are ever unsure please reach out and we can assist where needed.

Jennifer Powell, Editor  
**Weightmans**  
[editor@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk](mailto: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 June's General Committee meeting. There were 76 individuals from the following organisations:

|                          |                                     |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| • Astraea Linkskill      | • Glenville Walker                  |
| • Bermans                | • Gregory Abrams Davidson           |
| • Broudie Jackson Canter | • Halsalls                          |
| • Byrne Frodsham & Co    | • IJBH Ltd                          |
| • Champion Solicitors    | • Irwin Mitchell                    |
| • Canter Levin & Berg    | • Jackson Lees Group                |
| • CEL Solicitors         | • KLS Law                           |
| • CG Professional        | • Liverpool Hope University         |
| • Cook & Talbot          | • Liverpool John Moore's University |
| • DLA Piper UK           | • Paul Crowley & Co                 |
| • Dutton Gregory         | • Wilde & Company                   |
| • Farrington Law         |                                     |

Liverpool Law Society's membership now exceeds 2,340 individuals from 236 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, James Mannouch

As part of my Presidency, I am aiming to create stronger links between Liverpool Law Society and other representative bodies for the benefit of our members. This month, I enjoyed a productive meeting with David Wafer from the Institute of Directors, and we have agreed to work collaboratively. It follows up on meetings I have held with Damian Waters from the Confederation of British Industry, and with Phil McCabe from the Federation of Small Businesses. I represented the Society at the Liverpool City Region Business Group for the first time, this month. It was an informative meeting that detailed work being done by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and its respective growth boards. I shall have follow-up meetings and will report back in future editions.

On 16 June, I attended a Roundtable Discussion staged by the SRA. The discussion was structured around perceived changes within the legal services market, particularly with regard to large firm failures and the SRA's concerns around behaviours in the high-volume, consumer claims market and associated risks to consumers. As part of the discussion, we were consulted on the SRA's Business Plan and Budget for 2025-26, and for your convenience, I include a link <https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/news/press/business-plan-consultation-2025-2026/>. I am due to attend a meeting with the SRA's Board and Senior Team in Liverpool on July 7 and shall provide an update thereafter. Any member wishing to speak with me in advance of this meeting may get in contact via [president@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk](mailto:president@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk)

On 10 June, we held our monthly General Committee meeting, with the Officers, Directors and Committee chairs being joined by **Elizabeth Rimmer**, Chief Executive at LawCare (<https://www.lawcare.org.uk/>). For readers who are not familiar with LawCare, it is a charity dedicated to the well-being of our

profession. LawCare was founded in 1997 when a group of lawyers from all areas of the profession lobbied the national Law Society for independent funding to be put in place to support lawyers with alcohol addiction. It soon became clear that lawyers had other needs, so the charity developed expertise in helping lawyers deal with illicit drug use, depression and stress. These days, the charity's remit is broader still, but one thing marks out LawCare from other organisations providing help is the fact its advisors are drawn from within the profession. As we know, our job creates unique pressures and, to my mind, it is preferable for an advisor to understand their nature.



On to more convivial matters! On 25 June, the Society staged its second annual Golf Tournament - held in my hometown of Heswall. I am a retired golfer (I retired at a very early age), and I must say the event has caused me to wonder whether I stepped back too soon. The course and facilities were outstanding; the weather fine; and the company spirited. The Tournament was co-organised by LLS and Jaidan Events, with **Sharon Stanton** doing a particularly good job in managing the day. Thanks to all who sponsored, attended and donated (with the President's Charity benefitting to the tune of £2,510). Every penny of that money will go to needy individuals in Merseyside.

Another cause for celebration were the two events held on 20 June to mark the 200-year anniversary of the national Law Society. A daytime event was kindly hosted by Jackson Lees at its Exchange Flags offices. **Richard Atkinson**, President of the Law Society, chaired this event and **Richard Miller**, Head of the



Justice Team, provided an inciteful update on Justice. Richard's presentation covered a broad range of topics including legal aid funding, court delays, modernisation of the court service and digitisation / AI. I was struck by the number of topics that dovetail with LLS' own work, for example our ongoing campaign to reduce court delays and negate their impact on lawyers and clients. Later that evening, guests attended a gala event at Liverpool Town Hall, again to celebrate the bicentenary. **Ian Jeffery**, Chief Executive of the Law Society, chaired a discussion to explore the Future of Law in Liverpool, and I was privileged to contribute as a panellist. It is worth noting that Liverpool was chosen as a location in which to mark the bicentenary along with a select number of other cities. Such endorsement from the national Law Society symbolises Liverpool's importance to professional legal services within England and Wales and to our ongoing commitment to access to justice.

Looking forward, we will welcome the next President of the national Law Society, **Mark Evans**, to our city on 13 November when he will speak at the 2025 Annual Dinner and Legal Awards. Nominations for awards open in July and bookings for dinner are now being taken. This event sells out, so I would encourage early booking.

**James Mannouch**  
President

[president@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk](mailto:president@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk)



# LLS Meetings & events – July/August 2025

| Start Time       | Meeting/Event                                 |
|------------------|---|
| 08/07/2025 12:30 | General Committee                             |
| 09/07/2025 13:00 | 2027 Bicentenary meeting                      |
| 15/07/2025 13:00 | Editorial Sub-Committee                       |
| 16/07/2025 13:00 | Civil Litigation Sub-Committee                |
| 17/07/2025 13:00 | Directors' meeting with local councillors     |
| 17/07/2025 16:00 | Family Business Sub-Committee                 |
| 24/07/2025 13:00 | Future Planning Sub-Committee                 |
| 24/07/2025 16:00 | Criminal Practice Sub-Committee               |
| 29/07/2025 12:30 | Finance & Policy Sub-Committee                |
| 30/07/2025 12:00 | Equality, Diversity & Inclusion 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; 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](mailto:committees@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk)

## Consultation Paper

### Referred by the General Committee:

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](mailto:committees@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk)

| Committee  | Consultation Paper title   | Closing date |
|------------|--|--------------|
| Regulatory | <a href="#">Changing our requirements on first-tier complaints</a> | 25/07/25     |



# Leaders in Law:

## Edwina Harkin of Paul Crowley & Co Solicitors



### 1. Briefly describe your role as Director and Head of Department at Paul Crowley & Co and the main duties of this position

With nearly a decade at Paul Crowley & Co, I can confidently say that no two days are ever the same. I wear different hats throughout each and every day. Wearing the hat of a director, I share responsibility with my fellow directors in setting the strategic vision, driving business growth, fostering a strong firm culture, and ensuring operational excellence. We place a strong emphasis on mentoring, upholding ethical standards, and managing key client relationships, to ensure the firm's long-term success and reputation.

I play a key role in business development, adapting to the modern practice of law firms and sharing the responsibility for the firm's financial performance.

As Head of the Family Department, I manage and develop a talented and compassionate team while running my own caseload. I enjoy advocacy at court which means that I always need to be a few steps ahead to ensure that a high level of client care is always delivered in line with the firm's strategic direction. I have grown with the firm and enjoy the challenge of training new solicitors. My goal is to help them build confidence in client interactions and to support their growth into competent, independent solicitors aligned with the firm's standards.

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

One of the biggest positives is the opportunity to lead and influence both within the firm and in the wider legal community, allowing me to help shape the culture and policy of the business, which gives me a strong sense of professional fulfilment.

As a family solicitor/advocate I work in some of the most harrowing and emotionally demanding complex cases involving children and families. It can be deeply rewarding especially when achieving positive outcomes for clients in difficult situations.

I enjoy the challenge of developing the department and younger solicitors coming through the legal community which goes hand and hand with departmental growth.

The only downside with family law cases is they often involve conflict, trauma, and vulnerable client's which can be emotionally challenging over time but I wouldn't change it, as these client's matter.

### 3. What do you see as your biggest challenges?

As a High Street firm recruiting and retaining top quality solicitors can be a challenge. Competition is intense and High Street firms typically can't match the large city salaries. However, our culture promotes a healthy work-life balance, career development, and meaningful client work that fosters long-term job satisfaction.

### 4. What aspects of the firm are you most proud of?

Our firm's strength lies in its people and culture. We have a dedicated team, many of whom have been with us for years, creating a strong sense of continuity and shared purpose. Following the loss of our Managing Partner, Paul, in 2022, the team pulled together with

resilience and commitment. Our ethos of going "above and beyond" for clients remained as strong as ever. We're proud of our local roots, supporting charities and honouring Paul's legacy in lasting, meaningful ways.

### 5. What are your immediate short-term goals?

- To modernise the firm through digital transformation
- To maintain financial stability across the business
- To support and train the next generation of solicitors
- To continue to improve internal systems for exceptional client satisfaction

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

Reflecting on the past decade at Paul Crowley & Co, the future is certainly bright! Over the next ten years, the Board of Directors alongside our staff will continue to enhance growth on a client model that will be value driven, digitally accessible and transparent.

I can see us expanding while preserving our core values and putting our people first.

I have always embraced change, and I am excited for the future.

### 7. What legacy, would you like to leave the firm?

I want the culture to run so deep that it stays with the firm, no matter who's in charge.

I aim for the firm to be packed with people ready to step up. I want our clients to feel confident and secure because they trust us and see how seamless our transitions are.

If I can help build a future where dedication, organisation, and a readiness for change are second nature, then I'll have done my job well.



# Brabners expands offering with strategic investment in The Sustainability Academy



**Leading independent law firm Brabners has completed a groundbreaking strategic investment, acquiring a 30% stake in Liverpool-based The Sustainability Academy in a move designed to extend its client offering as well as accelerate its growth ambitions.**

The Sustainability Academy, founded in 2020 by Sara Wilcock and Gary Carney, delivers online training and consultancy to organisations seeking to define, achieve and report on their sustainability goals, by equipping them with the knowledge and tools required to take meaningful action on environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues. The Academy's training is based on the framework of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and provides IEMA-accredited programmes and bespoke ESG leadership development. Clients include household names such as Peel L&P and the Royal Air Force Cadets.

The investment marks another significant milestone for Brabners as it continues to extend its offering into complementary non-legal services. The businesses will now also form a close partnership aimed at working with Brabners clients – to help them integrate sustainability into their strategy, operations and regulatory reporting.

The Sustainability Academy has also joined Brabners' growing True North network, which brings together more than 430 businesses, business leaders and other organisations, who have come together to play their part in unlocking the true potential of the Northern economy.

**Robert White**, CEO of Brabners, said: *"Our position as a leading independent law firm enables us to make exciting investment decisions such as this, as well as to build meaningful partnerships with organisations that are aligned with our mission to make the difference for our clients, our people and the communities we serve."*

*"We are delighted to announce our partnership with The Sustainability Academy and this important milestone for our firm, as part of our strategy to extend our offering into complementary non-legal services, as a route towards strengthening our relationships with clients even further and opening up new routes to market for specialist, scalable services."*

**Nik White**, managing partner at Brabners, said: *"What makes this opportunity even more compelling is that it aligns perfectly with our purpose, our values and our status as a B Corp. The Sustainability*

*Academy is a business we know well and trust, with a proven track record in delivering real impact by working alongside sustainability directors and ESG-conscious leadership teams. By investing now, we are able to support the Sustainability Academy team to scale, and to position the business and our partnership at the heart of the sustainability agenda – which will only become more important for our clients in the years ahead."*

**Sara Wilcock**, co-founder of The Sustainability Academy, said: *"As a client of the firm, Brabners has supported our business since day one and so to now welcome them as an investor and strategic partner is a huge vote of confidence in our business. This partnership gives us the opportunity to grow faster, reach more organisations and to continue to develop high-impact training and consultancy at pace that – ultimately – helps businesses turn sustainability goals into impactful action."*

**Gary Carney**, co-founder of The Sustainability Academy, added: *"Aligning our mission with a purpose led organisation like Brabners will allow us to increase the impact we make. We are looking forward to building our relationship as a partner in action as we continue to grow and scale both businesses."*



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# Weightmans promote two female leaders to Equity Partner



**Catriona Wolfenden**



**Chantal Hannell**

National law firm, Weightmans has announced the promotion of two partners to its equity partnership, part of an evolving strategy that champions innovation, collaboration and client excellence.

The addition of **Catriona Wolfenden** and **Jane Price** increases the firm's total equity partnership strength to 45, with the total partner count currently standing at 267.

**Catriona**, who joined Weightmans in 2007, becoming a partner in 2019, leads the firm's product and innovation team and was recently recognised in the 2025 Lawyer Hot 100. Jane joined Weightmans in 1999, becoming a partner in 2011, and acts as the client relationship partner for one of the firm's major insurer clients.

In a further boost to the firm's leadership, **Chantal Hannell** has also joined as IT director. A seasoned IT leader with a strong track record in global IT strategy, service delivery, and transformation, **Chantal** joins at a pivotal time for the firm when technological advancements such as AI and automation continue to have a big impact on the sector.

The announcement follows **Sarah Walton** becoming the firm's first female managing partner in April of this year – succeeding **John Schorah**, who stepped down after 12 years.

**Sarah Walton**, managing partner, said:

*"We are proud to welcome Catriona and Jane as equity partners.*

*Both have consistently demonstrated exceptional talent, drive and passion for their work over the years, and they embody our values and shared purpose to see the possibility every day. Their leadership has been instrumental in our growth, and we are confident they will play a vital role in shaping the firm's continued evolution. Congratulations to both."*

Welcoming **Chantal**, **Stuart Whittle**, partner and chief technology and innovation officer, said:

*"Chantal's diverse background – including roles in media, education and entrepreneurship - shapes her collaborative and strategic approach. Her passion for enabling positive change through technology will help the firm meet the challenges we face in this ever-changing space."*

**Catriona Wolfenden**, partner and director of product and innovation based in the Liverpool office, said:

*"I am delighted to join the equity partnership and look forward to continuing to drive forward our people-led innovation approach."*

**Chantal Hannell**, IT director, who is based in the Liverpool office, said:

*"I am excited to join Weightmans, and I look forward to working with colleagues to ensure our technology underpins personal, team and business objectives."*

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Annual Dinner featuring Legal Awards

## Liverpool Law Society's 2025 Legal Awards

# NOMINATIONS ARE OPEN!

### CATEGORIES

- OUTSTANDING TEAM AWARD - NON-CONTENTIOUS
- OUTSTANDING TEAM AWARD - DISPUTE RESOLUTION & LITIGATION
- OUTSTANDING TEAM AWARD - EMPLOYMENT LAW
- OUTSTANDING TEAM AWARD - FAMILY LAW
- EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION AWARD
- RISING STAR AWARD
- OUTSTANDING LAWYER AWARD
- LAW FIRM AWARD (1-49 EMPLOYEES)
- LAW FIRM AWARD (50+ EMPLOYEES)

With nine categories to choose from, we are confident there is something for everyone. Open to Liverpool Law Society members only.

For further details & to nominate, [click here](#).

Nominations close 12pm on 05.09.25



The winners of the 2025 Legal Awards will be announced at the Society's Annual Dinner on Thursday, 13th November.

**S P O N S O R E D   B Y**



# Welcome Denise!



Denise Chilton

Liverpool Law Society is delighted to introduce a new speaker to our programme; Denise Chilton, PCC, CPCC.

Denise is an award-winning, commercially aware Executive Professional Certified ICF Coach (PCC) with over 2500 hours of coaching experience. She works with a wide range of organisations across the public, private and not for profit sectors both nationally and internationally offering a range of coaching programmes and career support for mid - senior managers, early career managers and their teams.

Commencing September, we will be offering some online, bite size sessions, providing handy tips on:

## Managing the performance of others

[Managing the performance of others – The Hybrid team \(online\) | Liverpool Law Society](#)

## Advanced Communications

[Advanced Communication \(online\) | Liverpool Law Society](#)

## Building resilience & wellbeing

[Looking after you too – Building resilience & wellbeing \(online\) | Liverpool Law Society](#)

All of the sessions will provide practical tips to assist you.

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# Brown Turner Ross Solicitors Appoints Robert Morris as Chief Executive



Robert Morris

Seasoned legal management specialist to spearhead strategic growth at one of the regions fastest growing law firms.

Full-service law firm Brown Turner Ross have announced the appointment of **Robert Morris** as its new Chief Executive of the Southport/Liverpool and Formby based practice. A recognised Senior leader, Robert brings more than 36 years' Legal experience having held senior Legal management positions for 20 of those years.

Formerly Head of Operations at Bond Turner and previously a partner at Keoghs solicitors Robert will guide Brown Turner Ross' strategic direction and growth.

*"As Chief Executive I look forward to driving the firm's strategic direction and ensuring sustainable growth, both organic and through acquisition, with a sharp focus on delivering market leading client service,"* Robert said. *"It is an exciting time to join a forward-thinking*

*progressive business."*

Managing Director **Sam Bushell** welcomed the appointment saying, *"We are delighted to bring Robert Morris on board at this exciting time for Brown Turner Ross. Over the past several years we have grown substantially, acquired offices in Liverpool and Formby, and more than doubled our headcount. As we prepare for the next phase of our growth plan, we believe Robert's leadership and expertise will be invaluable."*

Robert Morris, aged 53 lives in the Ribble Valley and is married with 2 children.

Robert is also a Non-Executive Director of CILEX (Chartered Institute of Legal Executives).





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# Brabners adds to partnership in record round of promotions



**Nik White, Richard Rigg and Rachel James**

**Leading independent law firm Brabners has announced a record number of promotions including the addition of two more lawyers to its growing partnership, following another year of purpose-led growth.**

A total of 41 lawyers have been promoted across the firm, which continues to be recognised as the UK's 'Best Law Firm to Work For' by Best Companies. This includes private client lawyer **Rachel James** and family law specialist **Richard Rigg**, who have become part of the firm's now almost 100-strong partnership.

**Rachel**, who joined Brabners 11 years ago, advises high net worth individuals on complex wills, tax planning, estate administration and succession strategies. Based in Brabners' Barbirolli Square office in Manchester, she specialises in working with private clients and intermediaries, and has played a key role in strengthening the firm's relationships within these networks.

**Richard** is a family lawyer with expertise in financial matters on divorce, involving business assets, trusts, offshore holdings

and complex pension arrangements. He also advises on wealth protection and financial claims by unmarried parents. With Brabners since 2017, Richard is based in the firm's recently refurbished Liverpool office at Exchange Flags.

Both have played a key role in the launch and success of Brabners Personal – the firm's specialised service dedicated to supporting business owners and high net worth individuals, providing them with expertise from across Brabners' family, estate planning and wealth protection, probate, employment, litigation and charity teams, amongst others.

Alongside the additions to the firm's partnership, a total of 20 colleagues have been promoted to associate, 10 to senior associate and nine to legal director – bookending an eighth consecutive year of growth for the firm.

The announcement comes amid a period of sustained momentum for Brabners. The B Corp-certified firm recently announced a groundbreaking strategic investment, acquiring a 30% stake in Liverpool-based The Sustainability

Academy in a move designed to extend its client offering as well as accelerate its growth ambitions. This move builds on the recent launch of Brabners Protect – a dedicated health and safety consultancy designed to help organisations better manage workplace risk. Together, these initiatives reflect the firm's ambition to innovate around client needs and integrate added-value services at scale.

**Nik White**, managing partner at Brabners, said: *"Our continued growth as a purpose-led law firm wouldn't be possible without the talent and dedication of our brilliant colleagues. This latest round of promotions – our largest ever – reflects our ambition to invest in developing clear career pathways and supporting our colleagues' progression while building a more innovative and diverse business."*

*"This desire to continue evolving as a business is reflected by our partnership, and we're delighted to be joined by Richard and Rachel after all they've contributed to the firm in recent years."*

For more information, visit: <https://www.brabners.com>





## Celebrating 200 Years of the Law Society – A Memorable Evening in Liverpool



As the Law Society marks its bicentenary, its President and Vice President have been touring England and Wales, connecting with members at a series of celebratory networking events. On 20th June 2025, the spotlight turned to Liverpool, where around 100

members of the profession gathered at the stunning Town Hall for an evening of conversation, canapés, and community.

The evening began with a heartfelt welcome from **Richard Atkinson**, President of the Law Society, who paid tribute to **Andrew Holroyd CBE**. A former President of the Law Society and Liverpool Law Society and a dedicated solicitor, Andrew was honoured for an extraordinary 50 years in practice.

**Richard** also shared some inspiring insights into the profession today: the Law Society now represents over 200,000 members, with women making up 53% of the profession and 26% working in-house. He acknowledged Liverpool's enduring legal legacy, noting that the city's firms have "*long punched above their*

*weight*"—including one with roots deep in Liverpool's history that now sponsors a Premier League football stadium!

The evening continued with a panel discussion, chaired by **Ian Jeffrey**, CEO of the Law Society. The panel brought together a wealth of different experience and perspectives, featuring **James Mannouch**, President of Liverpool Law Society; **Alison Lobb**, Managing Partner at Morecrofts; **Katie Passley**, Senior Legal Counsel at Genetec Inc; and **Andrew Holroyd CBE**, Head of Risk & Compliance at Jackson Lees.

The conversation started with looking at what it takes to grow within legal services. **Andrew** reflected on Liverpool's deep-rooted culture of innovation and its unwavering commitment to justice, citing its push





for a Hillsborough Law and the role in the Covid-19 Inquiry. **Alison** raised concerns about over-regulation, echoed by **James** who called for closer engagement between the regulator and the profession to support sustainable growth.

No discussion of the future would be complete without touching on Artificial Intelligence. **Katie** shared her perspective that whilst AI is good at translating and summarising discussions, lawyers provide the human angle that remains irreplaceable.

The panel also delved into diversity issues including the changes to training of new solicitors and the challenges brought by the SQE. **Alison** observed that Liverpool stands out in terms of gender diversity, with many female managing partners and women holding senior roles. **Katie** added that from an in-house perspective, diverse lawyers bring valuable perspectives, especially in global businesses where cultural understanding is key.

Finally, the panel concluded that threats to the rule of law included the

lack of investment in the court system infrastructure and the back log of cases waiting to be heard at the Crown Court.

Audience questions sparked debate on justice devolution and pro bono work, with Liverpool noted as the only UK city outside London with three law centres. **Alison** called for the profession to positively promote the brand of solicitor and ensure good role models for newer entrants. **Katie** reminded us that lawyers can be both commercially aware and social warriors.

The discussion ended with a powerful reflection by **Tom Thrower**, Associate at Broudie Jackson Canter who recognised the attacks on the rule of law; the evolving routes to qualification and called for the profession to stand together and speak as one voice.

After such a thought-provoking discussion, everyone was very thirsty but luckily refreshments and canapes followed, rounding off what was a very enjoyable (and also hot!) evening.

**Nina Sahu**,  
Legal Director at Hill Dickinson LLP  
& director of Liverpool Law Society





# Merseyside Independent Business Awards 2025 open for entries



**The Merseyside Independent Business Awards (MIB Awards) is officially open for entries for 2025, marking another milestone in the celebration of entrepreneurial spirit, innovation, and community impact across the Liverpool City Region.**

The black-tie ceremony will take place on Thursday 16 October 2025 at Titanic Hotel Liverpool, bringing together 500 guests from across the city region's business community.

Founded in 2013 by Morecrofts Solicitors to mark the firm's 200th anniversary as a proud independent business, the MIB Awards were created to showcase and champion the diverse and thriving landscape of independent businesses across the region.

This year introduces new category, CIC Business of the Year, recognising Community Interest Companies that are making a difference through purpose-led business. The category aims to celebrate organisations that blend entrepreneurship with social impact, reflecting the growing role of ethical business in regional growth.

**Alison Lobb**, Managing Partner at Morecrofts Solicitors, said: *"The MIB Awards are about shining a light on the determination, resilience and creativity of independent businesses that power our local economy. Whether you're a start-up, a long-established company or a community-focused CIC, we want to hear your story. I would encourage every independent business in our region to consider entering - this is your platform to be celebrated."*

Returning for another year as headline sponsor is the Liverpool BID Company, reinforcing their ongoing commitment to supporting the region's business community. **Bill Addy**, CEO of Liverpool BID Company, said: *"Independent businesses are the beating heart of our city region. The MIB Awards not only celebrate their success but also highlight the incredible diversity and innovation they bring to our economy. We are proud to support this event once again and look forward to recognising those who make Merseyside such a dynamic place to live, work and invest."*

**Entries are now open at [www.mibawards.co.uk](http://www.mibawards.co.uk) and close on 11th July 2025. Businesses can self-nominate or be nominated by others. When nominated, the MIB Awards team will reach out directly with entry details.**

#### Categories for the 2025 MIB Awards:

- Trades or Manufacturing Business of the Year
- Professional Services Business of the Year
- Culture & Tourism Business of the Year
- Best Creative Business
- Children Focussed Business of the Year
- Retailer of the Year
- Best Start Up Business
- CIC Business of the Year (New for 2025)
- Food Venue of the Year
- Health and Wellbeing Business of the Year
- Employer of the Year
- Digital & Technology Business of the Year
- Business Person of the Year

*For more information or to request an entry pack, please contact the MIB Awards team at [mibawards@morecrofts.co.uk](mailto:mibawards@morecrofts.co.uk).*



# *Liverpool Business and Property Courts Forum*

## **Litigating Building Safety:** *Have we got it right?*

**Mr Justice Waksman**  
**Chaired by HHJ Cadwallader**



**Technology and Construction Court**  
in association with  
**Liverpool Business and Property Court Forum**

**Thursday 17th July 2025**

**16:30**

**Talk starts at 17:15**

**Drinks to follow**

**Brett Lecture Theatre**  
**Yoko Ono Lennon Centre**  
**60 Oxford Street**  
**L7 3NY**

**Book your place [here](#).**



# Apprentice apprehension



Matthew Chorley

As many of you will have seen recently, [The Department of Education published its long awaited update on funding for apprenticeships](#). In summary, funding for higher apprenticeships has been maintained, but will now be restricted to those aged between 16-21.

The key section from the statement is below:

*“Refocusing funding away from Level 7 (masters-level) apprenticeships from January 2026, while maintaining support for those aged 16-21 and existing apprentices. This will enable levy funding to be rebalanced towards training at lower levels, where it can have the greatest impact.”*

There has been unease in the industry that funding for higher apprenticeships could be pulled altogether, so this may come as a relief to firms and training providers. However, the decision to remove funding from those aged 22 and above is highly likely to reduce access to those seeking a career in law.

Since the introduction of the SQE (solicitor qualifying exam), there are two popular apprenticeship routes

to qualify as a solicitor. A six-year solicitor degree apprenticeship, allowing students to complete a legal degree alongside workplace learning, before eventually completing the SQE. There is also the graduate solicitor apprenticeship, which is aimed at law degree holders seeking funding to complete the SQE. The news raises questions for both routes, which have exploded in popularity in recent years.

The earliest possible point someone could start a graduate solicitor apprenticeship is 21 years old. As funding will no longer be available for those 22 and over, this leaves no room for movement in a prospective student’s progress. What happens if a student did not start university at 18? In a competitive field, what happens if a place on a course is not obtained at 21? What happens if a student has completed work experience, meaning they have graduated later? There are lots of questions that firms will need to consider. At first glance, it would appear funding is likely to shift back towards the student, whether that’s through students paying for exams themselves or whether fees can be paid back on qualification.

The six-year degree apprenticeship is a little different, in that this can be started after A-Levels at 18. The starting age for this apprenticeship under new rules is highly likely to mean this course will not be available to anyone 22 or above. This has struck a personal tone with me. I’m coming to the end of my fourth year as an apprentice solicitor. I started in September 2021 as a 27-year-old, who was beforehand somewhat lost in my career. It would be an understatement to say that a place on this apprenticeship has been life changing and it has given me the opportunity to forge a long and successful career, which would not exist without apprenticeship funding. I do not come from a wealthy background

with neither parent obtaining degrees. Without the funding, the opportunity to become a qualified solicitor simply wouldn’t exist. In a world where inequality is still rife, the reality is that not all aspiring legal professionals will have the privilege of financial support.

**Law Society President Atkinson** has called on the government to reconsider the age cap:

*“We urge the government to maintain apprenticeship funding for people over 21”, he said. “Level 7 solicitor apprenticeships continue to be the only route outside of university to qualify as a solicitor due to specific qualifications set by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA). Apprenticeships play a vital role in promoting social mobility.”*

One of the central aims of the SRA in introducing the SQE was to develop new and diverse pathways into the profession, responsive to the changing legal services market and promote a diverse profession by removing artificial barriers. Many will argue whether the SQE went far enough in doing so, but it has undoubtedly allowed access to the profession to many where it would not have been possible beforehand. The news is a kick in the teeth and a huge backwards step.

As my talented colleague [Cody Slater](#) (apprentice solicitor at Weightmans) so eloquently has put it:

*“A sad day for young parents who may have had their sights on an apprenticeship, to help fund their family whilst funding their career.*

*A sad day for those who travel and want to start their careers a little later.*

*A sad day for those who want to try something new.”*

**Matthew Chorley**  
– Apprentice Solicitor, Weightmans LLP

# DWF employment expert comments on UK labour market



Joanne Frew

The number of people out of work but actively seeking jobs increased in the last quarter as the UK labour market continues to battle against the ongoing economic climate. There were clear signs of the market weakening as employers take more steps to reduce their costs and protect themselves against future economic turbulence whilst more people previously classed as “economically inactive” seek to return to stable employment. This conflict between employers exercising caution over recruitment and more potential employees seeking work will need to be

**resolved in order for the labour market to stabilise over the next quarter.**

The estimated number of vacancies in the UK in March to May 2025 was 736,000 – the 35th consecutive quarterly decline with quarterly falls seen in 14 out of the 18 industry sectors. The increase in employer National Insurance contributions in April this year and the rise in the National Living Wage will undoubtedly have had an impact on recruitment.

The UK employment rate was estimated at 75.1% in February to April 2025. This is above estimates of a year ago, and up in the latest quarter. The UK unemployment rate was estimated at 4.6%, also above estimates of a year ago, and up in the latest quarter.

Annual growth in employees' average regular earnings excluding bonuses in Great Britain was 5.2% in February to April 2025, and annual growth in total earnings including bonuses was 5.3%. Employers are having to balance keeping

costs under control with demands for increased pay from employees. Thinking outside the box has never been more important with many employers focusing on talent retention programmes which don't demand considerable immediate expenditure.

The employment market is currently experiencing significant turbulence due to global political uncertainty and major changes in employment legislation. Labour-intensive sectors like hospitality, retail, and manufacturing are likely to face the greatest challenges in the near term, necessitating cost-cutting measures.

Fostering a positive workplace culture and employee engagement, ensuring clear communication, and maintaining transparency are essential components for employers to navigate this challenging period.

**Joanne Frew**  
DWF

## A Tribute to Lily Lamond



**Lily Lamond**  
02/07/2002 – 06/05/2025

**It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of our much-loved colleague and friend, Lily Lamond.**

Lily joined Maxwell Hodge in December 2021, working as a Paralegal in our Disputes and Litigation Team whilst continuing her studies at the University of Liverpool. Lily quickly progressed in her role and soon after became part of the Personal Injury Team and Medical Negligence Team. She therefore supported various clients through different litigation matters, giving them thorough and empathetic advice.

Lily successfully graduated from university in July 2024, achieving a first-class degree in Law with Criminology.

She was determined and positive throughout and even when facing her cancer diagnosis, her positivity and bravery was an inspiration to all who knew her. Lily recently raised thousands of pounds for the Little Princess Trust, which is testament to the person she was.

Lily was due to start her solicitor apprenticeship this year and embark on the next stage of her career. Tragically, she never got the opportunity, but we know that she would have had a brilliant career as a solicitor. The legal profession has lost a bright talent but more than that, we have lost a wonderful friend. We hold her family and loved ones close in our hearts as they navigate life without her. We will never forget you, Lily.





# LIVERPOOL LEGAL WALK

6PM, THURSDAY, 2 OCTOBER 2025

5k fundraising walk in aid of



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S U P P O R T E D   B Y



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- Prevent destitution
- Allow older people gain the support to which they are entitled
- Support women and children who have been trafficked for domestic servitude or prostitution.

At the end of the 5K fundraising walk, each walker will have a chance to relax, mingle and network at our post-walk drinks reception kindly sponsored by St John's Buildings and the University of Law.

IN AID OF THE ACCESS  
TO JUSTICE  
FOUNDATION



This is a great opportunity for colleagues from across the region to come together and take part in a relaxed event after work.



[More info](#)

# Update from the Society's Access to Justice Committee

The 5 June Access to Justice Committee was dominated by the issues arising out of the Cyber attack on the Legal Aid Agencies' online systems. While the committee members were sympathetic regarding the actual attack, there was huge frustration with both the LAA and the MOJ as it's become clear that the LAA had no disaster management or contingency plan in place. The information and guidance released by the Legal Aid Agency has been limited, slow and has

still not covered all of the issues and questions raised by providers.

The committee also discussed the potential benefit cuts and there were particular concerns with the impact this may have on need for housing related legal advice which is already experiencing considerable unmet demand.

Our next meeting is scheduled for 2nd October (the day of the 2025 Liverpool Legal Walk!) and we look forward to

seeing committee members at lunchtime and at the Walk that evening.

Should you wish to raise any issues with me, I can be contacted on [itownley@broudiejacksoncanter.co.uk](mailto:itownley@broudiejacksoncanter.co.uk)

## Ian Townley

Chair of the Society's Access to Justice Committee and Divisional Director of Billing & Costs Department at Broudie Jackson Canter

## Norman Jones Port Sunlight 10k



Another medal under my belt after completing the Port Sunlight 10K race on Sunday 8th June 25. After some ominous predictions of a rainy morning the rain held off leaving the conditions perfect to run in.

My finish time was 1 hour 28 minutes that's 3 minutes faster than my 10K tunnel run in April.

As the course around the village is 5K I ran the course twice and was provided with my split time. 47 minutes on the first circuit



41 minutes on the second. Next time I need to put my foot down more on the first circuit.

The cheers I received from the waiting crowd as I put in a big sprint to the finish line was incredible.

As I walked to the car a lady called to me from her car and said "You are an inspiration" "wow, I wasn't expecting that."

PP Norman Jones



# New Government- New Hope for Justice?



**The Law Society held a discussion event at Jackson Lees in Liverpool on Friday 20th June 2025 titled 'New Government - New Hope for Justice?' They were joined by lawyers, charity leaders, university lecturers along with members of the Liverpool Law Society. Richard Atkinson, President of the Law Society and Managing Partner at Tuckers Solicitors and Richard Miller, Head of Justice at the Law Society were the key note speakers.**

The cyber attack on the Legal Aid Agency (LAA) featured heavily. Providers were initially notified of the attack on 30th April 2025 but its severity became clear by 16th May 2025. It was apparent there was some way to go with respect to the contingency measures which were having varying degrees of effectiveness. The Law Society has been pushing the LAA to ensure payments are restored and applications resolved so that they may be granted in real time. Some systems have been restored and there are injunction proceedings against the hackers. The Law Society has daily contact with the LAA on this issue and would be open to suggestions from Members as to the inadequacies of the current contingency measures for those on the ground making applications and claiming payments so that they may include these in their representations. The attack has also highlighted the lack of investment in

digital IT systems and the inadequate security of data for the profession and their clients. The latest hurdle in the Legal Aid profession is only going to add to the current backlog of cases before the Courts as some cases will not be able to progress without confirmation of funding and adjournments will abound.

As those working in the sector will be well aware the long-term funding challenges for both criminal and civil legal aid is now a serious crisis. From recruitment issues into the public law professions, to a grave shortage of specialist lawyers in many parts of the country to the monumental backlog of cases it is hard to see any immediate remedies.

During the event we heard numerous colleagues share their experiences and challenges. At the end of December 2024, Crown Courts had 67,600 outstanding cases, which was the highest end-of-quarter total ever recorded<sup>1</sup>. With Crown Court trials now being listed for 2029 this is a damning indictment of a broken system in need of a significant increase in funding.

It was clear that the civil law field was also being hit with Immigration lawyers now being paid a fixed fee per case rather than an hourly rate, which is woefully inadequate for the amount of time and

work involved. Due to the current rhetoric in parts of the media they are also being placed at risk. In August 2024 some 29 law firms practising Immigration were under threat from individuals. The Law Society, stepped in to protect its members, protecting their details, offering ongoing support and advocating for the police to take the threats seriously.

The Law Society stepped in to protect individual members and firms directly but also challenged inflammatory language and dangerous narratives in the media which serve to negatively influence public perception of lawyers.

Beyond the cyber attack and funding crisis the Law Society highlighted the challenges and opportunities around new technology in the legal sector. It made waves when it came to early Employment advice but didn't cope as well when it came to more emotive areas such as Family Law. Opportunities for maximising the use of technology included that it could address unmet needs whilst addressing responsible and ethical practice. This was to be balanced alongside data privacy and potential for bias.

It is interesting that the current government is headed by a Prime Minister who was once a Criminal Prosecutor and the President of the Law Society is a



Criminal Defence Advocate. Refreshingly, when it comes to important decisions which impact the Legal profession, the people making the decisions have had first hand experience. This brings hope for the future that lawyers and their clients will not continue to be overlooked.

During the discussion, the Bellamy Report which resulted in a Judicial Review of the government's decision not to implement the increase in legal aid funding as

promised was referenced. Namely that *"the system depends to an unacceptable degree on the goodwill and generosity of spirit of those currently working within it"*.<sup>2</sup>

Never has this been more true, Public Lawyers have this in abundance and the government has long taken advantage of this notion.

If the recruitment of Public lawyers fails due to being dissuaded by their Academic Leads and if the ones who take it up can no longer afford to meet their basic living needs at what point does goodwill run out?

A strong theme of **Richard Miller's** speech was the interconnectedness of our legal system. Lawyers promote growth in other industries. The gap we bridge for public services allows other public services to do their job which impacts business tax. Better public services including legal services benefit everyone. It's time to change the narrative and work together to

save the pillars of our justice system.

The meeting was a great reminder of the value of coming together and the important roles the national and regional Law Society play in advocating and providing a voice for the public law sector.

#### Kate Young

Solicitor and Higher Court Advocate  
Astraea Linskills Solicitors  
[kateyoung@a-l.law](mailto:kateyoung@a-l.law)

<sup>1</sup> [Court statistics for England and Wales - House of Commons Library](#)  
*Court statistics for England and Wales - Research Briefing*  
Friday, 13 September, 2024

<sup>2</sup> *Lord Justice Singh and Mr Justice Jay remarks in the Judicial Review brought by the Law Society challenging the former Lord Chancellor's response to the Bellamy Report- Neutral Citation Number: [2024] EWHC 155 (Admin) Approved Judgment Pg 44*



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casualty management and more), salvage and wreck removal, marine engineering, naval architecture, cargo science, metallurgy, fuel and fuel cargo analysis, fire and explosion investigations, coatings and paint analysis, and superyacht services and more.

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# The Work of Knowsley Chamber: Promoting and Driving Business Growth since 1987



Rachel Peak

**Knowsley Chamber plays a pivotal role in supporting local businesses and fostering economic growth within Knowsley and beyond. We are a private sector-led organisation and act as the voice for businesses of all sizes and sectors. Representing a diverse mix of industries from manufacturing and construction to creative and digital, the Chamber acts as a crucial connector between local businesses, public bodies, and the wider regional economy.**

The Chamber strives to work in collaboration for the benefit of its members and the borough. Co-located with Knowsley Council's Business Growth and Major Development Teams it forms part of Invest Knowsley to deliver a One Front Door approach to investment and business support and works to create the right conditions for businesses to start, grow, and succeed.

The Chamber continues to evolve and grow, led by a strong leadership team. Chief Executive **Rachel Peak** has now

been in post for a year, having taken up the role in July 2024. Rachel also serves as Head of Business Growth at Knowsley Council – a dual role that underpins the Chamber's powerful private-public sector partnership.

Reflecting on her first year, Rachel said: *"I have a unique role which is built on Better Together principles, through it we as a Chamber are well placed to access a wider range of expertise and work closely with other stakeholder in a number of forums to support our businesses and the Knowsley community. Our members are the heart of the Chamber and we continue to work to seek their input and insights to shape our work for their benefit"*

Over the past year, Rachel has led the Chamber to continued sustainable growth and to ensure its resilience. The Chamber's business plan for 2025/26 is based on 4 key pillars of activity that are Chamber Services and Performance, Commercial Sustainability and Growth, Environmental and Social Outcomes and Governance. Networking is one of the Chamber's core strengths. Regular events and specialist forums offer valuable opportunities for collaboration and knowledge sharing. These include B2B Networking, the Construction Forum, Manufacturing Forum, The Peoples Forum, Environment Network and the Women in Business Forum. Each forum creates space for businesses to meet, form new partnerships, and explore innovative ideas, often sparking relationships that lead to long-term success.

The Chamber's inclusive approach ensures that businesses of all sizes from start-ups to large employers can benefit equally. Networking events, training, and support services are all designed to level the playing field and foster a thriving local business community.

Members also enjoy exclusive access to the 'Quest' portal, which provides round-the-clock support across a range of business essentials, including tax, legal, HR, and health and safety.

Knowsley Chamber is also proud to be the delivery partner for the long-running "Working Well" programme, which it has supported since 2011. The scheme, funded by Knowsley

Public Health, focuses on improving the health and wellbeing of Knowsley's workforce. Through this initiative, the Chamber helps connect businesses and employees to the support they need, contributing to a more resilient and productive business community. The Knowsley Working Well Programme supports businesses in creating a healthier, more productive workforce by offering free services to improve wellbeing, reduce sickness absence, and boost employee retention. Knowsley businesses can also apply for a small Working Well grant to support staff health and wellbeing, with the programme open to all businesses, regardless of Chamber membership.

With a strong network of strategic relationships and a deep-rooted commitment to local economic development, Knowsley Chamber plays a vital role in helping businesses across the region grow, adapt, and thrive. The Chamber team works proactively every day to champion the interests of its members, ensuring they have the support, representation, and connections they need to succeed in an ever-evolving business landscape.

For further information email [info@knowsleychamber.org.uk](mailto:info@knowsleychamber.org.uk)



# Legends of the Green: Liverpool Law Society's 2025 Golf Tournament



President James Mannouch

The magnificent Heswall Golf Club was the venue for the second Liverpool Law Society Charity Golf Day this year. The course was in immaculate condition which saw some high quality (and shockingly bad) golf on display.



The weather was perfect, a mix of sun and cloud with a gentle breeze throughout the day. The weather showed off the beauty of the course as well as the surrounding areas across the Dee Estuary and North Wales.

The headline sponsor for the event was **Clio**. The Society are immensely grateful for their support this year. The Society also extend their thanks to our valued hole sponsors, **Excello Law**, **Landmark Information Group**, **QPI** and **Quilter Cheviot**, whose support and contributions help make this event such a success.

The event was once again superbly organised by **Sharon Stanton** from **Jaiden Events**. She ensured a warm welcome to all players, and that they had a bacon butty (or "batch" as it was affectionately referred to as we were on the other side of the River) before the golfers set off for a gentle start on the 1st tee.



The teams who participated were **Bermans**, **Caddick Davies Solicitors**, **Clio**, **Donoghue Solicitors**, **High Court Enforcement Group Ltd**, **Irwin Mitchell LLP**, **Landmark Information Group**, **Oriel Chambers**, **QPI**, **Quilter Cheviot** and **The Keith Jones Partnership**.

After strolling around the amazing course, and looking in bushes for several lost balls, the teams returned to the Club House for a cold drink on the terrace to

admire the amazing views and to share stories of great golf shots played. Some stories were more believable than others.

After a refreshing shower, everyone was sat in the function suite to enjoy a delicious dinner prepared by **Panache Catering**.



The meal was followed by a very entertaining address by compare extraordinaire (our President), **Mr James Mannouch**.

**James** hosted the much-anticipated awards for the golfing activities throughout the day. Nearest the Pin on the 7th hole was won by **Jack Bookey** (Team Irwin Mitchell). Next followed the Longest Drive on the 13th hole. After witnessing a superbly driven tee shot by **Daniel Fitzsimmons** (Team Donoghue Solicitors), his name was added to the marker and looked hard to beat. However, golf maestro, **Jack Bookey**, sent a rocket down the 13th fairway and claimed this accolade also....well done **Jack**.

The Winning Team went to **The Keith Jones Partnership** for the second year running. They edged the title, receiving an amazing trophy, with 112 points. The contest for the Individual Winner was unbelievably close, with the top four players being separated by only





3 points. Joint 3rd place was taken by **Adrian Fryer** and **Tom Gilsenan** with 37 points. The runner up was **Alex Jones** with 38 points but the winner was **Mark McCormick** (Team Oriel Chambers) with 39 points.



Commiserations to those who would have had a better chance at winning the (non-existent) awards of shortest drive, furthest from the pin, most balls lost and worse individual score. Don't worry though, we know that you must spend more time on your cases than perfecting your golf game – I feel your pain.

Following the awards, focus was switched to the Day's charitable cause, the Liverpool Round Table No.8 Charitable Trust. It was humbling

and heart-warming to hear about the amazing work that the Liverpool Round Table do for the most vulnerable in the community of Liverpool, which includes providing much-needed food hampers and financial assistance with heating bills to the elderly throughout the winter.

The raffle and auction followed, which included some fantastic prizes generously donated by **Leaf Eco Electrical, Quilter Cheviot, Restaurant Bar & Grill, Liverpool Round Table, Royal Liverpool Golf Club** and **Barnacre Farm Holiday Cottages**. We discovered that James will no doubt have a career as a talented auctioneer once his Presidency is over. A total of £2,500 was raised for a worthwhile cause.



The event was, once again, a resounding success and I would personally encourage anyone considering attending next year to give it a go; you will have a fantastic day.

Thank you to all those involved in the organising, hosting and participating in what was a hugely successful event. See you at the 1st tee next year!

**Kevin Donoghue**  
Society Director





# The 2025 Legal Talent & Leadership Conference: The People Perspective

Back in May, Liverpool Law Society held a Legal Talent & Leadership Conference, aimed at Practice Managers, Managing Partners, Chief Legal Officers, Heads of HR & Innovation, & those with management responsibilities. Deputy Vice President Alum Ullah chaired it & Talyor Wessing kindly hosted at their offices at the Royal Albert Dock.

The day began with a session from **Simon McCrum** on 'People, and The Perfect Legal Business' This was followed by a talk about 'Unlocking the Potential of Multigenerational Teams' by **Gemma Ellison**. Everyone enjoyed a refreshment break and chance to chat, before **Calum MacClean** on behalf of sponsors Miller Insurance provided a practical view on 'Embedding a good risk culture'.

Next up was 'How Culture Drives Commercial Success' with **Lindsey Kidd** followed by **Elizabeth Rimmer** of Lawcare reminding us why mental health matters.

Sponsors, speakers and delegates then had chance to network, whilst enjoying a buffer lunch, provided by **Simply Barmy**. There were two afternoon sessions; one with **Cat Williams** about Building Your Confidence and the final one with **Keith Harper** about How YOU make a difference.

Our chairperson **Alum** then brought the event to a close, thanking our kind sponsors Miller Insurance, the wonderful speakers involved and delegates for their support.

**Jo Downey**

Director of Education & Training, Liverpool Law Society.

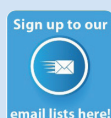
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We suggest you regularly check your junk email and add both these LLS email addresses to your 'safe senders' list to ensure you receive news, events and invitations from Liverpool Law Society!

**Not signed up?**



## Did you know?

**Liverpool Law Society staff answer dozens of calls a week from people seeking legal advice.**

**We refer them to our members who appear on our 'Find A Lawyer' search facility.**

**Check our website to see if your organisation's record is up-to-date and let us know of any changes needed.**

# Fletchers Solicitors' Solicitor Publishes New Book on Stroke Claims for Clinical Negligence Lawyers

Fletchers is pleased to announce the publication of a new specialist legal text authored by Iain Dodd, Head of the Brain Injury Department and Partner at Fletchers.

The book, 'A Practical Guide to Stroke Claims in Clinical Negligence,' offers an in-depth exploration of one of the most complex areas in clinical negligence.

Drawing on over 15 years of experience handling high-value and life-changing stroke claims, Iain has produced a practical and comprehensive guide designed for clinical negligence practitioners and those involved in stroke litigation.

The book addresses core legal concepts and challenges faced by lawyers handling stroke litigation, along with solutions and general practical points.

## Key topics include:

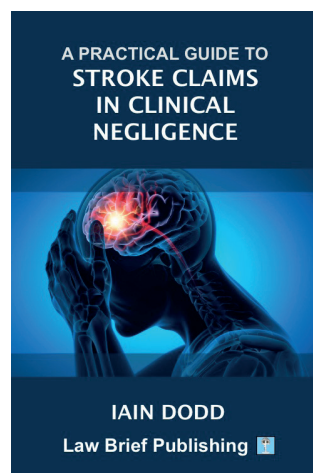
- **Causation:** Analysing the medical and legal nuances in establishing a link between breach of duty and injury.
- **Breach of Duty:** Common issues with the standard of care across primary and secondary care settings.
- **Expert Evidence:** Selecting and instructing the right experts to support liability and quantum.
- **Quantum:** Accurately assessing damages in stroke cases, including issues with care needs, rehabilitation and various other heads of loss.

Speaking about the publication, **Iain** said: "Stroke cases can be especially complex and often devastating to the individual and those close to them. My aim with this book is to help equip practitioners with clear, practical guidance to navigate these claims effectively and proportionately. Fundamentally, with a focus on sharing knowledge and hopefully developing further understanding and awareness of stroke to help improve outcomes."

The book has already attracted attention from legal educators and professionals as a timely and much-needed resource, particularly in light of the rising number of stroke-related claims and the increasing demands placed on NHS services.

**Iain Dodd** is a solicitor and a Partner at Fletchers Solicitors specialising in catastrophic injury claims arising from clinical negligence, where he also leads the Brain Injury Unit. Iain has extensive experience dealing with claims exceeding £1million arising from brain injuries, spinal cord injuries, birth injuries and amputations, along with other complex claims.


**Peter Rigby**, Managing Director of Clinical Negligence at



Fletchers said: "This publication reflects not only Iain's expertise, but also Fletchers' wider commitment to thought leadership and raising the standards in clinical negligence."

The book is available now through Law Brief Publishing and can be purchased here: ['A Practical Guide to Stroke Claims in Clinical Negligence'](#) by Iain

Dodd – Law Brief Publishing for £49.99.




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# Redefining 21st century justice as a vital public service

**The Law Society of England and Wales has published its recommendations from the 21st Century Justice project that offer a powerful vision for change to help narrow the justice gap.**

Justice affects all of us whether we are renters or homeowners, workers or small business owners, making a will or getting divorced. We all have to deal with at least one legal issue in our lifetime, yet millions face an uphill struggle to access justice.

Research by the Law Society shows that only one in six (16%) adults believe the justice system treats everyone equally. Access to justice has been impacted as legal aid deserts have left nine in 10 (90%) people in the UK without local support in some areas of law. Outdated systems mean that only around a quarter (23%) of county court cases are fully digitised, causing delays.

The justice system is an essential public service just like the NHS and education. The 21st Century Justice report makes recommendations to the government and the legal sector to build a civil justice system that works for everyone:

Create a free AI-powered tool, like NHS 111, that helps people understand their legal issue and signposts them to the help they need. This new government-backed tool could save the system around £72 million over 5 years. More than half (53%) of those who had a legal issue people looked online for information to manage their legal issue, up 4% since 2019.

Fix legal aid before all skilled providers completely disappear. The government must increase legal aid fees in line with inflation and create an independent body that regularly reviews them. A new model of trust needs to be developed between the government and legal aid providers. The recent cyberattack on the Legal Aid Agency is proof of the need to modernise it and improve access to justice. Legal aid is a lifeline for many, with 89% of adults saying it is important for people who cannot afford legal services.

Reform access to the ombudsman system. Currently there are too many ombudsman services, which can create confusion for people trying to access the right service. The government should rationalise the ombudsman landscape and boost their powers to support better access to justice.

**Richard Atkinson**, president of the Law Society of England and Wales, said:

*“The justice system is a public service, just like health and education. 21st century justice should work for everyone, regardless of their background or means. Whether it’s fighting eviction, tackling workplace discrimination or dealing with family breakdown, people need legal help they can trust.”*

*“The government and the legal sector must act on the recommendations of the 21st Century Justice report and improve access to legal support. The project unites voices across sectors to put forward proposals such as an AI consumer tool, investment in legal aid and ombudsman reform.”*

*“A justice system that works well is a measure of progress and prosperity that affects all of us. Our report puts forward practical solutions to achieve a vision for redefining a fair justice system that works for the common good.”*





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# SRA approves first AI law firm – what this means for the future of lawyers



AI is one of the biggest topics in law right now, and the conversation is no longer just theoretical. In a landmark move, the [Solicitors Regulation Authority](#) (SRA) has approved the UK's first AI-driven law firm, [Garfield.law](#). The SRA's Chief Executive, Paul Phillip, described this decision as a *"landmark moment for legal services in this country."* While many firms already use AI to assist with aspects of legal work, this is the first time a purely AI-driven model has been authorised to deliver regulated legal services in England and Wales. It marks a turning point and reveals that AI in law is no longer a future concern, but a present reality.

Since I entered the profession, I have seen just how far legal technology has come and how much initial resistance it can face. When DocuSign and cloud-based tools first emerged, many lawyers were sceptical. E-signatures raised concerns about whether they were valid for contracts or deeds, with doubts around enforceability and security. At the same time, early discussions around moving to the cloud were met with caution due to fears over confidentiality and data

protection. Yet both are now embedded in everyday legal practice. E-signatures are widely accepted, and cloud-based systems have become essential for collaboration and remote working. AI will likely follow a similar path; unfamiliar or unsettling at first, then gradually become integrated into the way we deliver legal services.

I explore what the SRA's decision means for the future of lawyers by examining the perspectives of two leading voices in legal innovation: **Richard Susskind** and **Nick Abrahams**. Susskind envisions a future where many traditional legal roles could be replaced by technology, especially if Artificial General Intelligence (AGI) develops further. Abrahams, on the other hand, argues that AI won't spell the end of lawyers, but will instead introduce new complexities that generate more disputes, not fewer. He also maintains that human judgement and nuance, which are at the heart of legal work, will remain essential and in demand.

Together their views, highlight a central challenge and opportunity facing lawyers today. That is to proactively engage with new technology, rather than resist it. AI

is not the end of the legal profession, but it will challenge us to rethink how legal services are delivered in the future.

## Will AI replace lawyers?

Susskind has been exploring AI in law since as far back as 1986, when he wrote a doctoral thesis on the subject. This was at a time when few in the profession saw technology as relevant, let alone transformative. In his book *Tomorrow's Lawyers*, he predicted that routine legal tasks would be automated and that new tech-based legal providers would emerge. He argued that the future of legal services would not be shaped by tradition but by innovation and client demand.

With the SRA now approving the UK's first AI-driven law firm, we are seeing those predictions materialise. [Garfield.law](#) is the type of alternative model Susskind described; streamlined legal services with regulated lawyers supervising its output and safeguarding ethical use. This supports his *"more for less"* challenge which is to offer client's faster and more affordable services without compromising legal integrity.

More recently, [Susskind](#) has suggested that if AGI becomes a reality, most traditional legal roles might not survive beyond 2035. This is a bold claim but with the SRA now authorising AI-driven law firms, it feels less like a distant speculation and more like an early step in that direction. Today's tools are already capable of drafting contracts and reviewing documents; tasks once reserved only for lawyers.

It is important to note that Susskind isn't predicting the end of lawyers altogether, just the end of lawyering as we have always known it. He identifies 15 emerging legal roles for future lawyers, which may not align with what most students have in mind when they start law school, but which remain intellectually stimulating and valuable. He compares this to the resistance craftsmen once showed to industrialisation, only to later discover new valuable forms of skilled work.

In his view, the legal profession isn't going away, it's evolving, and the challenge is whether we as lawyers are willing to evolve with it. Of course, AGI still has a long way to go, and issues such as regulation, ethics, and public trust won't be resolved overnight. There are also practical concerns from data protection to the risk of AI "hallucinations," where tools generate inaccurate or misleading information. But these risks don't mean we stop progressing, they just mean that we must stay informed and ready to guide how AI is introduced into our systems. If the past is anything to go by, the legal profession will continue to adapt, just as it always has.

### AI will reshape, not replace, lawyers

[Abrahams](#) offers a more grounded perspective, suggesting that AI will not replace lawyers but will reshape how we work by improving efficiency. This shift is already underway, with many leading UK law firms now using tools like Harvey, Claude, and Microsoft Copilot to assist with drafting and research. The key point is that the lawyer remains involved throughout, maintaining the quality and accuracy of the final output.

AI is clearly changing how we work, but clients generally don't stay loyal to a firm because of its tech. They stay loyal to the lawyer they know and trust, who understands their needs and offers balanced, human advice. The relationship between lawyers and clients is still fundamental, even as clients are expecting more for less. This is where AI can support us - not by replacing lawyers, but by freeing us up to focus on the parts of the job where human insight really counts.

Now is the time to become more proactive not passive and engage with the tools already available to us. To stay competitive, we must shift our mindset and take an active role in shaping how AI is used in our profession. We also need to rethink how we train and support the next generation of lawyers. AI literacy should be embedded into legal education as a core skill, whilst ethical awareness must be built into every system we adopt. I don't believe AI will eliminate lawyers, but it may eliminate those who refuse to embrace these changes.

### Practical steps for engaging with AI in legal practice

Wherever you are in your legal career, you're not expected to be an AI expert. You don't need to know how to code, but what will set you apart is your mindset. Curiosity and adaptability are becoming essential skills in modern legal practice.

Here are six practical steps to get started:

1. **Get curious**  
Watch demos and explore the tools already available. You don't need to be technical, just open-minded. Understanding what AI can and can't do will soon be non-negotiable.
2. **Learn to prompt**  
Generative AI is only as good as the questions you ask. Learn how to prompt effectively. It's a skill that will soon carry real advantages.
3. **Broaden your knowledge**  
Think beyond traditional black-letter law. AI regulation, data protection, and digital contracts are growth areas that need lawyers who understand both law and tech.

4. **Think commercially**  
Ask yourself how AI could save time, reduce risk, or add value for clients. This mindset will set you apart.
5. **Strengthen your human skills**  
AI can't replace client trust, empathy, judgement, or strategic thinking. Focus on developing these skills because they will matter more than ever in an AI-enhanced profession.
6. **Stay in the conversation**  
Join discussions about how technology is changing legal work. Follow legal tech leaders, talk to colleagues, and share what you're learning. The firms that succeed will be the ones where people are open and learning together.

No matter what your level of experience is, these small actions can help you build confidence and prepare for the changes ahead. As AI tools become part of everyday practice, they are not something we can overlook, but something we must learn to use responsibly.

### Looking ahead

We can't deny that the legal sector is changing and the SRA's approval of an AI-driven law firm makes that clearer than ever. Despite the varying opinions on AI in law, we must remain focused on what matters to clients. It's not just about keeping up with the latest tech, it's about broadening our knowledge so that we are better positioned to use these tools effectively and responsibly.

We don't all need to become AI specialists, but we do need to understand enough to identify risks like inaccuracies or bias and maintain the trust our clients place in us. The future of law isn't something happening to us, it's something we're actively shaping. With thoughtful engagement and ethical awareness, we can ensure AI strengthens our profession, not undermines it.

*This article is written in a personal capacity. The views expressed are my own and do not represent those of my employer or any affiliated organisation.*

**Kady Preston**  
Associate,  
Weightmans





## The latest news from Vauxhall Law Centre. Providing Access to Justice in the community since 1973.



Sam Holmes of VLC and Katie Corless of Equality & Employment Law Centre

### Law Centres Network Annual Conference

In June, Sam attended the annual Law Centres Network Conference, which took place in Leeds at the University of Law. The conference theme this year was 'Mutual Aid', a theory popularised by philosopher and naturalist Pyotr Kropotkin's. There were many useful

discussions and workshops examining how Law Centres can effectively collaborate to share resources and communicate more effectively. Through this, we hope to ensure greater stability throughout the network. There were also discussions on AI and how effective policy can ensure the safety of staff members and clients when

considering the issues that can occur through misuse. Additionally, there was a workshop to understand how we can effectively talk about access to justice through the Law Society's framing toolkit.

It was a great experience to participate in these discussions, and gain insight into how other Law Centres manage with increased demand and limited capacity. As well, it was an important and helpful reminder of the good work that is done across the country by passionate legal practitioners and law centre staff on behalf of the most vulnerable.

### Welcome to Abi and Alan

In not-so-new news, we welcomed two new Trustees to our board earlier in the year.

Abi O'Connor is a researcher at the New Economics Foundation (NEF), specialising in policy development and research into housing injustice and regional economic inequalities. As well as this, Abi is a passionate activist, having previously been an active member of ACORN community union, and is a founding member of Liverpool Residents Action (LRA), a grassroots group that focuses predominantly on housing injustice. She has been a strong supporter of the law centre's work, and has already been hard at work in her position as trustee.

Alan Kelly joins us following his retirement from his position as Development Officer here at Vauxhall Law Centre. Alan has been involved in community activism and anti-poverty work for many years. He was



Abi O'Connor with Alan Kelly

instrumental in the relaunch of our services, and the huge growth that law centre has seen in recent years. He remains a keen supporter of the law centres' staff and their work, and we're so pleased we could reel him back in to provide us with his insight, guidance, and knowledge of third sector work.

A huge thank you to both Abi and Alan for donating their time and expertise to our mission, and we look forward to their future as part of our fantastic board.

#### Recent PIP Case Study

Esther recently successfully represented a client in their Personal Independence

#### Payment (PIP) appeal.

The client had initially received no award and was incredibly anxious and distressed. They had completed the application form without any support, and due to their mental health challenges, they found it difficult to engage with professional services for assistance.

Despite this, we were able to build up rapport with the client by working sensitively and at their pace. We helped gather medical and supporting evidence, advised them on their options, and submitted a request for a Mandatory Reconsideration. When the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) refused to change their decision, we continued to support the client through the appeals process.

We supported the client in appealing the decision and represented them at the tribunal hearing. The appeal was successful, and the client was awarded both daily living and mobility at the highest level, just as we had requested.

This means they will now receive £187.45 a week for the next three years, as well as a backdated payment of nearly £9,750. This support will make a significant difference to their daily life and financial stability as they live with their additional needs.

#### Can you help Vauxhall Law Centre?

We would be grateful if you could support

our organisation's work by [making a donation towards our charity](#), helping us to continue providing access to justice to those who need it most. As a charity, we are reliant on funding and donations. Without this, we would not be able to meet the increasingly high level of demand on our services.

Further information can be found on our website.

Alternatively, if you think you or your company can support our work at VCLIC, please don't hesitate to contact us. We are looking for volunteers with skills in a wide range of areas such as Financial Management, HR, Technology, Fundraising, and Advice. If you have any skills and would like to get on board with us, please drop us a line at [recruitment@vauxhalllawcentre.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@vauxhalllawcentre.org.uk)

Please consider using volunteering as a means to meet some of your company's Corporate Social Responsibility commitments and support the local community.



# Regulation Update

## July 2025

The latest Regulation news from Andrea Cohen of Weightmans LLP



Andrea Cohen

Welcome to the Compli monthly round-up of developments and updates from the regulatory sector, and an overview of recent disciplinary decisions.

### SRA First-tier complaints rule changes consultation

Following a thematic review at the start of the year, involving visits to 25 firms and a survey of 750 firms, the SRA has launched a consultation on proposed changes to its rules to assist firms improve how they define and deal with complaints. These would include making changes to when complaints information must be provided, including at the conclusion of the matter as well as at the start; the way it is provided, and having a clear definition of what is a complaint. This will be linked with new guidance and increasing information collected about complaints by the SRA. The responses to the consultation should be submitted by 25 July 2025. Changes are expected later in the year, so watch this space.

### Sanctions update:

- **Improvements to GOV.UK sanctions content**

Further to a review and requests for clearer, better structured sanctions content, the following have been introduced:

- A new [sanctions hub page on GOV.UK](#)

[UK](#) that signposts essential UK sanctions content

- an expanded [collection of industry guidance for the Russia sanctions regime](#)
- an improved [regimes guidance collection](#) page

Results from multiple jurisdictions can make it difficult to search for sanctions content. To help, a pre-filtered [sanction search of GOV.UK](#) has been created which can be accessed from the hub page, which lets you find all UK sanctions content by keyword, date and content type. New subheadings to all the statutory guidance, making it easier to find sections of interest. We understand further improvements to content are underway.

- **OFSI releases Legal Services Threat Assessment**

The Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation (OFSI) has released its first Legal Services Threat Assessment, setting out the main sanctions compliance risks facing the legal sector. In the last 3 years, the legal sector accounted for 16% of suspected sanctions breach reports, (second only to financial services), with a significant number relating to licence conditions, e.g. exceeding value limits or failing to report in time, but the report considers that underreporting is 'highly likely'. The report also stated that there has been widespread misuse of complex structures and trusts to hide asset ownership by Russian designated persons. The SRA 'strongly encourage' firms to review client files, particularly those involving complex ownership or links to Russian DPs, improve internal controls and awareness around sanctions compliance, and report any suspected breaches promptly to OFSI. We anticipate this will be an area of interest to the SRA when reviewing files as part of an inspection/investigation.

- **SRA anti-money laundering and**

### sanctions data collection exercise

The SRA's annual AML and sanctions data collection exercise will open on 9 July and information must be provided by all regulated firms, not just those within scope of the AML regulations. The link will be sent to Compliance officers, so make sure someone with a mySRA account and a current relevant post and role recorded in mySRA has access if the COLP/COFA are out of the office, or knows to access the link on the SRA website [SRA | Firm anti-money laundering and sanctions data requirements | Solicitors Regulation Authority](#) as it's a regulatory requirement to complete the form. The SRA have helpfully provided a specimen questionnaire, and firms may want to start collating the information before the exercise goes live. Where appropriate, a firm will be able to submit a nil return.

### SRA fines increase, interventions remain high, while SDT referrals fall

In its recently published financial statement, the SRA revealed that in the year to end October 2024 it issued 173 fines totalling £1.3m, compared to 73 the previous year, totalling around £400,000. As we've reported over the last few months, fines have increased considerably, particularly in relation to breaches of AML, and also a record fine of £4m to a former non-solicitor owner of an ABS, so next year's report will far exceed the 2024 figure. The following year could exceed that, with the introduction of the SRA's unlimited fining powers in cases of economic crime. The report also noted that the number of AML inspections and reviews doubled to 545. There were fewer cases heard by the SDT, 78 compared to 99 in 2022/23, and this is likely to continue with more firms 'accepting' fines, rather than incurring additional (and usually irrecoverable) costs of defending allegations before the SDT with the risk of a costs order for all or part of the SRA's costs. The SRA closed

down 59 firms, a similar number to the previous year.

### Axiom Ince update

The latest indications are that the collapse of Axiom Ince may result in payouts of £41m from the SRA Compensation Fund. In total, around £60m went missing from Axiom Ince. As a result of the claims arising from the Axiom Ince debacle, following closely on the back of other interventions, including Metamorph, the SRA tripled the contributions to the fund for solicitors (£30 to £90), and more than tripled the amount from firms (£660 to £2220) for the current financial year. Present proposals are to reduce contributions for 25/26, but not to the extent they were increased last year (down to £70 and £1950 respectively).

### New practice notes and guidance

#### SRA guidance

The SRA has published the following since our previous update:

- [SRA | Publishing regulatory and disciplinary decisions | Solicitors Regulation Authority](#)
- [SRA | Mergers, acquisitions and sales of law firms - Warning notice | Solicitors Regulation Authority](#)

#### Law Society practice notes

- [Climate change and property | The Law Society](#)
- [Implementing whistleblowing arrangements | The Law Society](#)

### Disciplinary and regulatory decisions

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

#### AML fines

One firm has been fined nearly £64,000 for AML breaches, including failing to have PCPs in place or carry out client and matter risk assessments (CMRAs) dating back six years, with another firm fined almost £78,000 for failing to carry out CMRAs, CDD and source of funds checks on files reviewed, and seven other firms (at the date of writing) have been fined a total of £88,000. All fines are paid to HM Treasury.

### Struck off for dishonesty

A solicitor who told a client she had been awarded £3800, rather than the settled figure of £8500 plus costs, and then transferred monies to a rehab company where his wife was sole signatory on one of the bank accounts, creating false invoices and correspondence, has been struck off and ordered to pay £25,000 costs. The firm had instructed the company in numerous personal injury matters, and over four years had paid £266,000 for different PI matters, but the solicitor was the only fee-earner to instruct it. The solicitor denied his wife had anything to do with the company, but payments made to the account were transferred the same day into her personal bank account.

### Ban for solicitor who worked for three firms at once

A solicitor who claimed to work 100 hours per week, juggling three jobs in doing so, has been struck off. She was employed full time by one firm, contracting to work solely for them, but was also working two other roles as a locum and submitted timesheets claiming payment for the same hours on the same dates from both of those firms.

### Suspension for solicitor who acted for both claimant and defendant

A solicitor, owner of a law firm and holder of all compliance roles, who, despite the obvious conflict of interest pointed out by a paralegal, acted for both sides in a litigation dispute over a debt, has received a six-month suspension. He acted for one client over a debt and obtained default judgment and then acted on behalf of the defendant in an application to set aside the judgment. At the same time, the first client instructed the firm to enforce the debt, and it instructed a debt collection firm which subsequently declined instructions, telling the solicitor that he was “clearly conflicted”. It took a further two months for the firm to stop acting for both, and having said he would self-report to the SRA, he did not do so. The suspension will be followed by a three-year restriction order preventing him from acting as a COLP, COFA, manager or owner of a law firm.

### Dishonest solicitor avoids strike-off

A solicitor who deleted five email chains from the case management system which related to matters that led to a client complaint has received a 12-month suspension and £25,000 costs, but avoided a permanent ban, the SDT determining this fell within the limited group of cases where suspension was deemed sufficient sanction, finding that while she had been dishonest and had lacked integrity, she was not a dishonest person, the dishonesty being limited in duration and a ‘moment of madness’.

### Solicitor suspended for inappropriate touching

The SDT found that a solicitor inappropriately touched two colleagues at separate social events but cleared him of seven other allegations. It rejected his contention that, because the allegations arose outside the workplace, they did not raise a regulatory issue, finding the proved matters of non-consensual touching adversely affected the reputation of profession. He was suspended for 12 months and ordered to pay costs of £95,000.

### Banned for faking signatures

A law firm employee has been barred from working for another law firm without SRA permission for forging a client’s signature on a form by tracing it from another signed form. Two parcels of land had been sold but only one transfer form had been signed by the seller. The employee said she panicked as the matter was urgent and the fabricated document was withdrawn, the difference in signatures having been noticed by another fee earner.

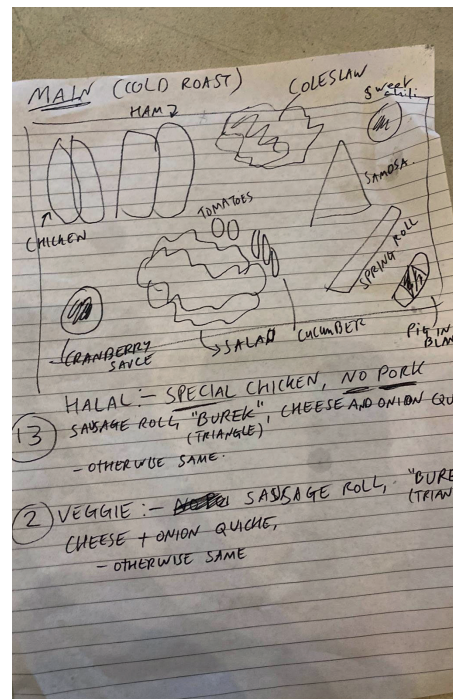
### How Compli can help...

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 [complil@weightmans.com](mailto:complil@weightmans.com).

**Andrea Cohen**  
Compli,  
Weightmans LLP



# Charity Spotlight: Liverpool Care Leavers' Christmas Dinner



Christmas Dinners for Care Leavers was set up in 2013 with the aim of no Care Leaver - a young person aged 16-25 who has been in residential or foster care - being alone on Christmas Day. The project is organised nationally and run by local volunteers across the country, supported by the Gold from The Stone foundation. This was established by Lemn Sissay



OBE, broadcaster and poet, who himself grew up In Care. ([www.goldfromthestone.org.uk](http://www.goldfromthestone.org.uk))

In Liverpool, we have developed an excellent working relationship with the Leaving Care Team, Social Services who support us in fundraising, volunteering and in making referrals. Currently there are over 700 Care Leavers in the city, many living alone with little or no family or community support. Christmas can be a particularly difficult and emotional time, highlighting isolation.

On Christmas Day we deliver a cold Christmas buffet meal, prepared to a high standard by our volunteer chef, who has been with us since our first event in 2021. In this diverse city we cater for all dietary requirements and the event is for people of all faiths or none.

We also provide stocking fillers, gifts chosen by the young person to a value of £100, plus bags of non-perishable food which has been donated by Waitrose for the past three years.

Everything provided is of a high standard to reflect how we value the Care Leavers - good enough is not good enough.

They are also offered the choice of a handmade patchwork quilt made by volunteers of Quilts for Care Leavers throughout the year. When growing up In Care **Lemn Sissay** said he was never hugged - the quilt is a hug to keep. Each quilt has a label sewn on that contains a positive message, examples include "Remember you are Important" and "Remember you are Strong."

We have built up a core group of approximately 35 volunteers who give up their Christmas Day to help prepare the meal and deliver gifts. The Unitarian Church, Ullet Road, Liverpool17 is our base, their team have opened their doors to support us and are a key part of our group. Some Care Leavers are placed outside the City boundary in neighbouring boroughs and we ensure they do not miss out on a delivery... We also respond to last minute emergency referrals which can occur.

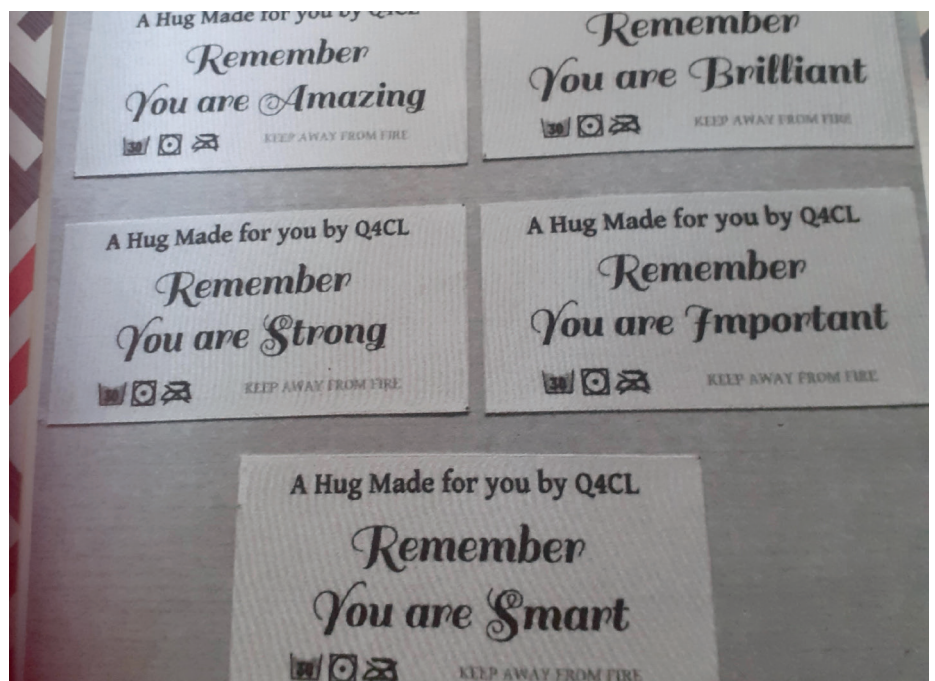


For our first event in 2021 we received 22 referrals and this has grown year on year - in 2024 we catered for 52 people. If they have their own children we provide gifts for them and a quilt made by volunteers of Project Linus.

We are a community based project relying on donations and fund-raising activities for finance. This year we hope to raise at least £6000 to cover the cost of food and gifts and ideally we would like to receive pledges of funding to secure future events. Over four years we have built up credibility with the Leaving Care Team, as reflected in the increase of referrals. After each event we review it, acknowledge difficulties and aim to avoid them in future years. We are both retired social workers with many years experience of working in safeguarding and with care experienced young people.

We hope you will be willing to support this event. For further information, please contact us on [Liverpoolclcd@gmail.com](mailto:Liverpoolclcd@gmail.com)

Kind regards  
**Caroline Fogell**  
 and **Hazel Gearing**





# 'AI is transforming the legal profession – but be informed and stay human,' says The Solicitors' Charity Trustee and innovative tech lawyer



Rory O'Keeffe, AI and innovative tech lawyer and Trustee of The Solicitors' Charity.

**Artificial Intelligence (AI) is revolutionising the legal sector, bringing major advances in efficiency and accessibility. But it also demands new levels of scrutiny, responsibility, and ethical oversight, says Rory O'Keeffe,**

AI and innovative tech lawyer, Founder of RMOK, Legal, and Trustee of The Solicitors' Charity.

Reflecting on the fast-moving integration of AI into legal workflows, O'Keeffe highlights both opportunities and risks for professionals across the sector.

*"AI is no longer a futuristic concept", he says. "It's here, it's in use, and it's reshaping how solicitors research, draft, and interact with clients".*

AI-powered platforms now offer support ranging from clause suggestions in Word to first-draft case summaries that mirror the work of a junior lawyer.

*"Time savings are the most obvious win", O'Keeffe notes. "AI can help firms work faster and more cost-effectively, but we must remain vigilant. These tools are still developing, and mistakes – like fabricated case law – can and do happen if we trust them blindly".*

O'Keeffe also points to the growing role AI is playing in improving access to justice. Chatbots and automated tools now guide the public through tenancy disputes, employment rights and immigration queries, offering vital support for those who might not otherwise seek legal help.

*"It's a win-win", he says. "The public get informed, and firms can triage cases more efficiently, directing time and expertise where it really counts".*

Despite these benefits, O'Keeffe urges the profession to proceed with care. *"Lawyers have a new duty, not just to use these tools, but to understand them", he explains.*

*"Knowing where your data goes, how your AI system works, and what biases may be embedded is now part of delivering safe, responsible legal services".*

He adds that AI adoption is no longer limited to large firms. *"Smaller practices, once priced out of legal tech, are catching up thanks to more accessible and scalable tools. The gap is narrowing, and that's exciting for the future of the profession".*

However, he cautions against being

swept up in hype. *"The best advice? Treat AI's output like a junior lawyer's memo. It's a starting point, not a final answer".*

The Solicitors' Charity, which supports the health and wellbeing of solicitors across England and Wales, is keen to ensure that lawyers are equipped to adapt to these changes while maintaining high standards of care, ethics, and professionalism.

*"As the technology evolves, so must we", says O'Keeffe. "AI will never replace lawyers, but it will change what we do, how we do it, and how we deliver value. The key is to stay informed, stay engaged – and above all, stay human".*

To learn more about The Solicitors' Charity and its work supporting solicitors in challenging times, visit [www.thesolicitorscharity.org](http://www.thesolicitorscharity.org).

[Want to support The Solicitors' Charity?](http://www.thesolicitorscharity.org)

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# Forthcoming Courses

| DATE       | EVENT  | SPEAKER                    |
|------------|--|----------------------------|
| 09/09/2025 | Introduction to Trusts   | Rebecca Roscoe             |
| 10/09/2025 | <b>Private Child Law Conference</b>                            | Various                    |
| 11/09/2025 | Costs Litigation for Junior Lawyers                            | Anthony Neild              |
| 16/09/2025 | Cyber Security "The Good, The Bad and The Amusing"             | Rob Gibbons & Andrew Allen |
| 17/09/2025 | <b>The Property Conference 2025</b>                            | Various                    |
| 19/09/2025 | Managing the performance of others – The Hybrid team           | Denise Chilton             |
| 24/09/2025 | <b>Family Finance Conference</b>                               | Various                    |
| 01/10/2025 | Navigating the Risk: What Conveyancers Need to Know About SDLT | Amanda Perrotton           |
| 03/10/2025 | Will Drafting & Estate Planning Update                         | Prof Lesley King           |
| 07/10/2025 | Introduction to Private Client Tax                             | Rebecca Roscoe             |
| 08/10/2025 | <b>Clinical Negligence Conference</b>                          | Various                    |
| 10/10/2025 | Trial advocacy for solicitors                                  | Mike Winston               |
| 14/10/2025 | Building Safety Act & other post Grenfell Issues               | Richard Snape              |
| 16/10/2025 | SRA Business Competencies for 0-3 PQE Solicitors PT1           | Keith Harper               |
| 17/10/2025 | Ogden tables and future losses                                 | Mike Winston               |
| 21/10/2025 | Practical Probate: the works                                   | Rebecca Roscoe             |
| 23/10/2025 | SRA Business Competencies for 0-3 PQE Solicitors PT2           | Keith Harper               |
| 24/10/2025 | Advanced Communication   | Denise Chilton             |

## **\*\*NEW\*\* MULTI DELEGATE DISCOUNT FOR MEMBERS**

Commencing Sept 25 we are launching our brand-new members-only benefit - firms booking multiple delegates on the same legal training course will enjoy substantial discounts, making it ideal for teams looking to learn together or firms aiming to offer equal training opportunities across departments.

This offer cannot be used in conjunction with the Training Passport.

  
**Introduction to Trusts**  
 with Rebecca Roscoe

**\*Multi Delegate Discount Offer for Members\***

'Live' online, 9th September, 9.30am - 4.30pm

**Level: Introduction**

This online seminar will be of use to will writers, solicitors and practitioners who want to develop their knowledge of trusts and their practical application.


Trusts are an integral part of the practitioner's toolbox and this course will give the practitioner confidence when advising clients who wish to protect their assets from sideways disinheritance, care fees, third parties or to simply protect their beneficiaries from themselves!

The main focus of the course will be Will Trusts and covers the following:

- Trust foundations
- Different types of trust
- IPDI's including ROO's, FROO's, LIT's and FLIT's
- Nil rate Band Discretionary Trusts
- 2 year Discretionary Trusts
- Full Discretionary Trusts
- Trusts for minors
- Taxation
- Choosing the "right trust"



For further information, [click here](#)

  
**2025 Private Child Law Conference**  
 Wednesday 10th September, 9.30am - 3pm

**Attend in person or online**

A must-attend training event for legal professionals involved with family law, providing a round-up key developments in law & practice

To be chaired by DJ O'Neill & with sessions confirmed so far:

**Abduction law and how to spot an abduction case and identify defences**  
 Ruth Kirby KC, 4PB

**Enforcement of Child Arrangements Orders**  
 Gemma Thomas, 7 Harrington Street

**The changing drugs landscape in the UK**  
 Alpha Biolabs

**Covert Recordings in Family Proceedings: Practice & Procedure**  
 Sasha Watkinson & Beth Morton Deans Court Chambers

**How the court should/will deal with allegations of Parental Alienation**  
 David McCormick, Exchange Chambers

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

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**Cyber Security "The Good, The Bad and The Amusing"**  
 with Robert Gibbons & Andrew Allen

Tuesday 16th September, 2pm - 4pm

**Venue: Liverpool City Centre**


**This course is Free for Members**

**This event is aimed to educate businesses and people on how to be more cybersecurity aware and safer (includes a live demo).**

**Topics Covered:**

- How to find if your user credentials are in the dark web?
- What's the worst that can happen?
- Are employees secure at work?

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For more information, [click here](#)

  
**2025 Property Conference**  
 Wednesday 17th September 9.30am - 4pm  
 Attend in-person or online

Join us for an event designed specifically for legal professionals working in the property sector. Whether your focus is residential or you're looking to expand your knowledge into commercial transactions, this event offers practical insights and updates to support your practice.

**The Lender's Handbook: Helpful or Handcuffs?**  
 John Jones

**The Customer is always right! Right?**  
 Alex Gregory Chialton, Dutton Gregory

**Reporting on Leasehold Property**  
 Tom Kerwin, InfoTrack

**HMLR: Local land charges and HMLR collaborating with MHCLG on data standards**  
 Keith Lloyd & Pam White, HM Land Registry

**The Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act 2024**  
 Richard Snape

**The Landlord & Tenant Act 1954: when it applies**  
 Richard Snape

**Climate risks and property transactions**  
 Keith Davidson, Irwin Mitchell and Groundsure

**Building Safety Act**  
 Sarah McGuinness, Freeths

**Option to attend the full day or just half day, with multi delegate discounts available**

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**2025 FAMILY FINANCE CONFERENCE**  
 WEDNESDAY 24TH SEPTEMBER 9.30AM TILL 3.10PM  
 ATTEND IN-PERSON OR ONLINE

A must-attend training event for solicitors, barristers & other practitioners involved with family law. Providing a round-up of key developments in law & practice and an opportunity to hear directly from some first-class speakers

**The Concept of Matrimonialisation**  
Margaret Parr, 7 Harrington Street

**You can't make an omelette without breaking eggs: nuptial agreements after *Entwistle v Helliwell***  
Nicholas Bennett, 29 Bedford Row

**Needs vs Resources: Modest Asset Divorces**  
Liam Kelly, Deans Court Chambers


**Matrimonial Business Valuations: Interpreting accounts & using experts**  
Jack Clitheroe, BTG Advisory

**Disability and Divorce**  
Lee Speakman, Exchange Chambers

**Financial Remedies Update**  
Sam Hillas KC, St Johns Buildings

Multi delegate discounts available

[Book Here](#)

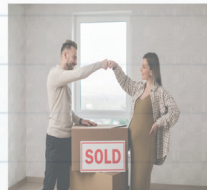

  
**Navigating the Risk: What Conveyancers Need to Know About SDLT**  
 with Amanda Perrotton

**'Live' online, 1st October, 11am - 12.30pm**


This event is aimed at anyone in the residential conveyancing team, commercial property team, private client who find themselves inadvertently giving tax advice within their transactions, when they are not insured to do so. This applies to most.


**Covering:**

- Identifying when a fee earner could be giving uninsured or unqualified advice
- Demonstrating the pitfalls and risks of doing so
- Discussing how the SRA deals with Solicitors firms giving tax advice
- Reviewing departmental policies, procedures and letters of engagement to reduce the risk
- Areas of Risk
- Surcharges on second homes
- CGT exemptions
- Transfers of Equity
- Case studies
- Money Laundering Terrorist Financing and Transfer of Funds Regulations 2017
- CQS SDLT policy



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

  
**Will Drafting & Estate Planning Update**  
 with Professor Lesley King

  
 'Live' online, 3rd October, 11.15am - 1.15pm

Nobody wants to draft a will which gives rise to litigation or which fails to meet the needs of the deceased and family. It is particularly important at the moment to draft flexibly to allow provisions to be adapted if changes in legislation make it desirable.

Problems often arise as a result of failure to take initial precautions and failures of communication. 'Deathbed' wills provide particular challenges. This session will suggest some routine processes and procedures which can minimise the risks.


Many clients worry about the possibility of 1975 Act claims. The decision in *Sim v Pimlott* provides a possible route to minimising the risk.


The session will also consider how to approach will drafting and estate planning in the light of the changes coming to the treatment of undrawn pension funds and the cap on business and agricultural property relief.

The webinar is suitable both for newly qualified and for more experienced practitioners.

**\*Multi Delegate Discount Offer for Members\***  
 Pay £80 for 1st delegate, then £45 for 2nd & only £22 for all other delegates (+vat)  
 Booking total will show full price but invoice will be discounted.  
 Multi delegate discounts cannot be used in conjunction with the Training Passport

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

  
**Introduction to Private Client Tax**  
 with Rebecca Roscoe

  
 'Live' online, Tuesday, 7th October, 9.30am - 4.30pm

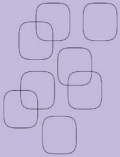
This introductory course is designed to give practitioners a foundation in private client taxation covering inheritance tax, income tax and capital gains tax. For those practitioners who are new or returning to the subject this will give you the confidence to understand the fundamental principles when dealing with estate planning, will preparation and estate administration.

**Covering:**

- A summary of income tax rules with a focus on estate administration and interest in possession trusts.
- Understanding the principals of CGT when making gifts and also in the context of estate administration/trusts.
- Considering the fundamentals of IHT when making lifetime gifts and dealing with estate administration introducing simple application of the residence nil rate band.

**\*Multi Delegate Discount Offer for Members\***  
 Pay £175 for 1st delegate, then £99 for 2nd & only £49 for all other delegates (+VAT)

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




Liverpool Law Society

**Trial advocacy in the Civil Courts**  
with Mike Winston

Friday 10th October, 9.30am – 4.30pm, Lunch provided

**Venue:** 7 Harrington Street Chambers, Liverpool, L2 9YH



Increasingly, solicitors are choosing to conduct advocacy in their own cases in the lower courts. The ability to conduct a client's case from beginning to end is an attractive proposition from both a client care perspective and from the point of view of retaining litigation income within the firm.

On qualification, solicitors enjoy a right of audience in the County Court, both in chambers and in open court. However, many solicitors feel that a lack of formal training in trial advocacy inhibits their ability to present a client's case competently.

**This one-day course will cover all the essential elements for solicitors who wish to improve their ability as an advocate. Likewise, solicitors and other lawyers who only appear in chambers will find the techniques taught and discussed to be useful in their day-to-day practice.**

**Who should attend:** All litigators who wish to learn how to conduct trials & interim hearings in the County Court. Lawyers who wish to improve their understanding and appreciation of advocacy to improve their litigation practice.

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

**\*Multi Delegate Discount Offer for Members\***  
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Booking total will show full price but invoice will be discounted.

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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.

**Brabners** 16,759 followers 22h •

We're looking forward to the Wirral Chamber Music Festival this weekend and delighted to be sponsoring the not-for-profit festival for the second year in a row.... more

**Dutton Gregory Solicit...** 3,662 followers 1d •

Today, some of our Woking team are the the Woking College Careers Fair to discuss all things working in law with the students. ... more

**PETER EDWARDS LAW...** 241 followers 3w • Edited •

Congratulations to Chloe on her graduation!

We're proud to celebrate a significant milestone in ... more

**Fletchers Group** 10,609 followers 5d • Edited •

Wednesday's Empower Her conference was a powerful reminder of what happens when women come together with intention, compassion, and a shared mission. ... more

**Empower Her Conference** • 7 pages

fletchers empower her conference

**Excello Law** 5,525 followers 3d •

Our North West team, led by Julie Mogan, has been out in force this past week, proudly supporting and celebrating the communities around our Liverpool, Manchester... more

**Mann Roberts Solicitors** 3,353 followers 7h •

Happy Wellness Matters Wednesday!

Yesterday, to mark our wellness initiative, the team ... more

**Weightmans** 28,914 followers 2w •

Yesterday, our Managing Partner, **Sarah Walton**, and Product & Innovation Director, **Dr Catriona Wolfenden**, participated in a panel discussion at the Prolific... more

**Leigh Day** 23,783 followers 21h • Edited •

This year, our asbestos team is visiting key sites across the UK that reflect the devastating legacy of asbestos and raising vital funds for asbestos support groups... more

If you have an interesting story to share, why not send it to us, clearly labelled 'Social Media Page': [editor@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk](mailto:editor@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk)

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