

April 2026

Liverpool Law

Liverpool  Law Society

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

LLS International Women's Day celebration, 5th March

Report on page 32





Do you want to save 2 hours per day?

LEAP is empowering the future of legal services for lawyers through a suite of cloud-based solutions including legal practice management, document automation, legal accounting and AI-driven software. By adopting AI, lawyers can **reduce errors, increase billable hours and enhance overall productivity.**

Find out more at: leap.co.uk/ai



Strategic Partner



April 2026

CONTENTS

DEADLINES



4	The latest from the Editor, Jennifer Powell
5	From the President
6	LLS Meetings & events
6	Consultation Papers
7	Leaders in Law
8	Routes into the law
12	Hilton Spence Family Law
13	Marcela Salter Legal 500 Awards win
14	Paul Crowley & Co Solicitors Celebrated at British Conveyancing Awards
15	DWF advises Walker Crips Group plc
16	Hall Brown Family Law Launches in Liverpool
17	DWF secures landmark Supreme Court victory
18	Leigh Day successes at Northern Powerhouse Awards
19	Going further guides clients and practices towards cleaner environments
20	Knowsley Chamber
21	Liverpool Law Society Directors meet with Local MPs
23	Reliability is becoming the true measure of sustainability in insurance supply chains
23	Upcoming Cohabitation Reform Spring 2026
24	Pathways into the profession
24	MJLD charity bingo night success
25	Solicitors' Judges' Event, 12th March
26	Liverpool Law Society Celebrates 2025 Award Winners and Sponsors at Fazenda Reception
27	The Evolving Consumer Law Landscape
28	Carpenters Group marks International Women's Day 2026
28	Fletchers launches maternity training grants programme
29	Liverpool to stage second 'Journey To Justice' legal summit
30	Council Member's Report
32	International Women's Day Event
34	Legal Services and Regional Growth in Liverpool
35	Emerging drug trends in the UK
36	The latest UK labour market statistics
37	Theatre review
38	Merseyside Law Centre
40	A dog-walker's tale
42	Regulation Update
44	Charity Spotlight
46	Cyber Security
48	The Solicitors' Charity
49	Criminal court delays remain high denying people in Liverpool timely justice
50	Forthcoming Courses
54	Social Media Highlights

May 2026 edition: Tuesday, 21.04.26
 June 2026 edition: Friday, 22.05.26
 July 2026 edition: Monday, 22.06.26
 August 2026 edition: Friday, 24.07.26
 September 2026 edition: Friday, 21.08.26
 October 2026 edition: Tuesday, 22.09.26
 November 2026 edition: Friday, 23.10.26
 December 2026 edition: Friday, 20.11.26

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



Join us on Linked In:

[LiverpoolLawEMag](https://www.liverpoolnews.com)



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

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.

Published by Baskerville eMedia
Merseybank Business Centre
55-57 Seabank Road, Wallasey
Merseyside CH45 7PA
Tel: 0151 651 2776
simon@baskervillemedia.co.uk



Editorial Committee Dates 2026

Meetings start at 01.00 pm.
except where noted.

Wednesday 15th April
Tuesday 19th May
Tuesday 16th June
Tuesday 21st July
No August Meeting
Tuesday 15th September
Tuesday 20th October
Tuesday 17th November

Welcome to the April edition of Liverpool Law



It is a busy time of year with financial year end for many of our members and Easter holidays coming up. I hope you all have time to relax and enjoy some time off.

The Mazur decision is still awaited. Hopefully we will have the outcome for next month.

With the weather improving (somewhat!) our minds here at LLS have turned to our annual Legal Walk which you will see has been arranged for 23 September 2026. Please sign up if you can and raise some well needed funds for Access to Justice.

There is media attention following the released findings on page 49 of the delays, in Merseyside in particular, of dealing with criminal cases. Access to Justice is so important and our law centres are under increased pressure. We also have details on page 29 the details of the Journey to Justice legal summit which has been arranged for the second year with support from LLS for Thursday 30 April with the places limited, so act fast if this is something you would like to attend and support.

Liverpool has also had the pleasure of the **Jodie Comer** one woman play *Prima Facie* at the Everyman Theatre recently, I wasn't able to attend unfortunately but I'm aware a lot of our members did. We have a great article from a friend of mine, and in fact the man who christened me as a baby(!), **Henry Corbett** on page 37 so I hope you enjoy the read. Please let us know if you would like to see more articles and reviews like this, which is something we used to do pre-COVID, we can always look to bring the feature back if there is enough interest.

Many thanks

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

Welcome to new members

We would like to give a warm welcome to our new members who were approved for membership at March's General Committee meeting. There were 11 individuals from the following organisations:

- Bond Turner
- Fletchers
- Hill Dickinson
- Percy Hughes & Roberts

Liverpool Law Society's membership now exceeds 2,390 individuals from 175 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, Sarah Mansfield

As President of Liverpool Law Society, it has been a privilege to attend to a number of collaborative events and initiatives between Liverpool's five universities and the legal profession in Liverpool. It is clear that the Liverpool legal community continues to demonstrate its strong commitment to nurturing the next generation of lawyers through a series of collaborative events designed to give students meaningful, practical experience. For me, it has been great to observe events where students have had the opportunity to develop essential professional skills through client interviewing exercises, advocacy training and mooting competitions.

These events brought together students from all five universities in the Liverpool City Region, creating a collaborative environment that reflects the strength and diversity of our local legal education sector. Through structured interviewing sessions, students were able to practice engaging with "clients", identifying key legal issues and developing their ability to communicate clearly and effectively. Mooting events also provided invaluable advocacy experience, allowing participants to test their legal reasoning, argument structure and courtroom presentation.

What has been particularly impressive is the willingness of Liverpool's legal profession to support these opportunities. A large number of local solicitors, barristers and members of the judiciary generously volunteered their time to act as mentors, judges, interviewers and coaches. Their involvement ensured that students received authentic feedback grounded in real professional practice, helping to bridge the gap between academic study and the realities of legal work.

The benefits of these initiatives extend well beyond the students themselves. For legal professionals, engaging directly with aspiring lawyers provides an opportunity to share knowledge, identify emerging talent and strengthen connections with the universities that form such an important part of our legal ecosystem. For students, it offers confidence, insight and a clearer understanding of the professional standards expected within the legal sector.



Most importantly, these events highlight the power of collaboration between the Liverpool legal profession and our universities. By working together, we are building a supportive and dynamic pathway into the profession, ensuring that future lawyers are well prepared to serve our communities and uphold the highest standards of legal practice.

Sarah Mansfield

President

president@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk

LLS Meetings & events – April/May 2026

Start Time	Meeting/Event
14/04/2026 12:30	General Committee
15/04/2026 13:00	Editorial Sub-Committee
16/04/2026 13:00	Access to Justice Sub-Committee
17/04/2026 13:00	Past Presidents' Lunch
28/04/2026 12:30	Finance & Policy Sub-Committee
29/04/2026 13:00	Education & Charities Sub-Committee
30/04/2026 13:00	Non-Contentious Business Sub-Committee
12/05/2026 12:30	General Committee
14/05/2026 13:00	In-House Lawyers Sub-Committee
14/05/2026 16:00	Family Business 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

Consultation Papers referred:

Papers referred to committees:

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

Committee	Consultation Paper title	Closing date
Civil Litigation & Criminal Practice	Housing offences sentencing guidelines	09/04/26
Criminal Practice	A new Victims' Code	30/04/26

Consultation Paper Submitted:

Following discussions between the members of the Regulatory Committee at a recent meeting, a response to the MoJ's consultation paper on the 'Interest on Lawyers' Client Accounts Scheme' was submitted by the Chair. A copy of this response was forwarded to the Joint V for discussion at the meeting which was held in Leeds on 26th March.

Leaders in Law: Peter Parsonage



Peter Parsonage

Peter Parsonage, Solicitor and Deputy Manager of Serious and Catastrophic Injury at Carpenters Group, has been elected to serve as a Director of Liverpool Law Society and will take on the role of Chair of Civil Litigation in 2026. His journey to this point has been shaped by a mixture of academic curiosity, practical experience, and a determination to build a meaningful career in the legal profession.

His interest in studying law emerged during his A Levels, thanks largely to an English teacher who, after watching him take part in a school debate, remarked that she could imagine him becoming a lawyer. He decided to attend Keele University, where the joint Law and Finance degree appealed to him. The course allowed him to specialise in his final year, and as he progressed, he found himself increasingly drawn to the legal side of his studies. Influential lecturers and modules on international law, including the role of legal systems in global change such as the dismantling of apartheid, captured his imagination.

After graduating, Peter decided not to move straight into legal practice. Having spent his entire life in education, he felt the need for a break and wanted to experience something entirely different. The likely cost of further study and the inevitable debt that this would bring also played its part. He spent the next few years working in various factories and worksites, doing a variety of work, whilst at the same time trying to find time to travel and save future funds. The experience proved invaluable. During these years, he met a wide range of people, helping to broaden his understanding of the

world, something that he believes helped shape his interactions with both clients and colleagues alike.

Enjoyable as the work was, Peter decided it was time to return to the legal path. He enrolled at the College of Law in Chester (now the University of Law) to complete the LPC. It was during this time that he met his future wife.

Peter's first legal role was as a paralegal with CCI Legal Services in Porthmadog, where he worked on debt recovery for the NHS. After two years, he and his partner decided to move back to England, and he secured a paralegal position with Weatherseal Holdings Limited in Cheshire. He progressed quickly, eventually becoming the acting manager of the inhouse legal department and dealing with disputes, debt recovery, property lease issues, and matters arising from a recent company buyout.

Although he enjoyed the work, he remained focused on securing a training contract and secured a paralegal role at Michael J. Halsall, with the possibility of a training contract for those who impressed.

With a twoyear waiting list for training contracts and being slightly older than some of the other paralegals, Peter was determined to stand out and demonstrate how his experience was an advantage. He worked closely with the business development manager and two partners to demonstrate his commitment and ability to add value to the firm. His efforts were rewarded when he secured a training contract early.

Peter trained in personal injury and general litigation, whilst also completing a conveyancing secondment, as this was during the period when trainees were required to undertake both contentious and noncontentious seats. Upon qualification, he joined Camps Solicitors as a fee earner, managing a substantial caseload from the outset. Although he gained valuable experience, he soon realised the firm was not the right longterm fit. A vacancy at Silverbeck Rymer offered a clearer career path and prospects for the future. He joined their fasttrack team, handling more and more complex clients and cases due to what his supervisor called a calm and

patient manner with people. He later secured a position in the multitrack team to continue the desire to work on more and more complex matters. It was during his time there, that the firm was acquired first by Quindell Legal Services and later by Slater and Gordon, giving him exposure to significant organisational change and the need to be adaptable in life.

An opportunity arose to move to the Serious & Catastrophic Injury team at Carpenters Group. The role offered the chance to work on larger and more complex cases within a firm that matched his ethos for doing the best for clients whilst also promoting the idea of being socially responsible to the wider community. The opportunity proved too good to turn down, so he joined the firm in 2017.

9 years on and his passion and commitment to working with catastrophically injured people remains undimmed. Indeed, he comments that trying to use his skills and knowledge to make a difference in the lives of people devastated by injury is the reason that gets him to work every morning. At Carpenters he now serves as both a Solicitor and Deputy Manager of the Serious and Catastrophic Injury Department. Alongside his casework and supporting the team in general, he is committed to training and encouraging the next generation of personal injury lawyers coming through, drawing on his own experiences and by utilising both internal and external training resources.

The commitment to social responsibility and making a difference, extends beyond just his clients and is shared by his employers Carpenters Group. This shared belief has enabled and empowered Peter to be involved with raising funds and supporting charities that help those affected by injury, such as the Spinal Injuries Association and Aftermath Support. Additionally, he is one of the founding committee members for Headway Chester and sits as a director on the board of the Business Beats Cancer Chester, part of Cancer Research UK.

Peter has been involved with Liverpool Law Society for around eighteen months, when he joined the Civil Litigation Committee.

Continues over page...

Leaders in Law continued...

As a Director, he hopes to support firms and their lawyers in navigating challenges of an ever changing and evolving industry, such as the Mazur case and potential impacts on the wider legal community. He also hopes to represent Liverpool—his adopted home—in national discussions and consultations, putting across the views of Liverpool's legal community.

Outside work, Peter spends as much time as possible with his wife and children, albeit this seem to heavily involve ferrying his children, to their various sporting activities and hobbies. He still plays golf occasionally and also turns out sporadically for a Sunday league veterans' football team. Over the last 5 years he has trained in Taekwondo,

a hobby that started with his children's wish for him to accompany them and has led to him competing in a number of regional and national tournaments, securing a number of medals and trophies.

We wish Peter every success in his career and in his role as Director for 2026.

Routes into the law: Callum Waterhouse



Callum Waterhouse

Callum Waterhouse, a Graduate Solicitor Apprentice within the Clinical Negligence department at Fletchers, has been elected Vice Chair of the Merseyside Junior Lawyers Division (MJLD) for the 2025-26 term. Originally from Stockport, Callum spent the majority of his formative years in Aspull, near Haigh Hall in the Wigan district. He attended St Joseph's RC High School in Horwich before earning a place at the prestigious Winstanley Sixth Form College. During his time there, he pursued AS Levels in history, French, Law, and Politics, eventually focusing on the latter three for his A Levels. Although he initially considered a joint honours degree that included a year in France, he decided to dedicate his career solely to law.

In 2017, Callum began his legal studies at Liverpool John Moores

University. The conclusion of his degree was significantly disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic; his final examinations in April 2020 were complicated by social distancing measures, and he was forced to wait two years after finishing his studies to attend his formal graduation ceremony. Following university, Callum secured his first professional role as a Paralegal at the Bolton office of Keoghs LLP. He spent three years with the firm and became a file handler running a litigated caseload.

In January 2023, Callum joined Fletchers Solicitors, where he was offered a Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE) training contract. Having sat his final examinations in February, he is currently awaiting his results, which are due in May. Transitioning into clinical negligence was a new experience for Callum, yet he finds the work deeply rewarding. He particularly appreciates the opportunity to advocate for individual clients and make a tangible difference in their lives, a contrast to his previous work on behalf of large insurance companies at Keoghs LLP. Callum's current caseload includes matters involves a wide range of injuries as a result of clinical negligence. Upon qualifying as a solicitor, Callum intends to progress through both the associate and partnership programmes within the Clinical Negligence department.

When Callum first joined Fletchers Solicitors, the firm operated primarily out of Southport and

Manchester, but it has since expanded into Liverpool and many other offices. As the Clinical Negligence team integrated into the new Liverpool office, Callum was eager to immerse himself in the local legal community. After attending the MJLD members' ball, he successfully applied for a position on the committee. He has since served as Social Representative and National Representative before his recent election as Vice Chair. Fletchers remain highly supportive of Callum's involvement on the MJLD, as it strengthens the firm's ties with the Liverpool Law Society (LLS). This partnership was recently highlighted by a careers event hosted by Fletchers for local university students, which was attended by LLS President **Sarah Mansfield**.

As Vice Chair, one of Callum's primary objectives is to help young people access opportunities within the legal profession. He is particularly concerned that the recent removal of funding for SQE apprenticeships for those over the age of 21 has created new barriers for aspiring lawyers.

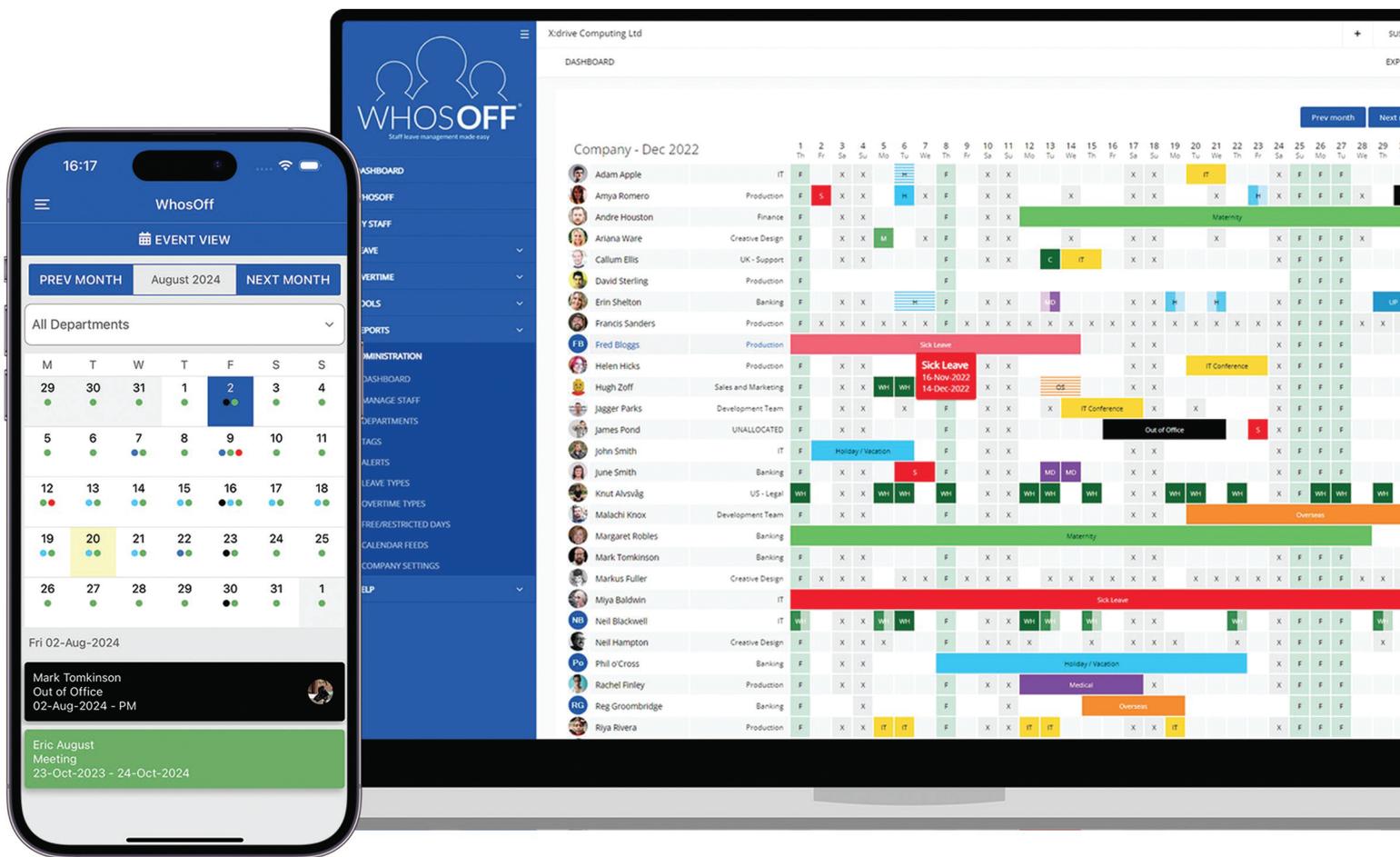
Outside of his professional life, Callum enjoys relaxing by playing padel. He recently purchased a home in Newton-Le-Willows area with his partner, and the couple has recently welcomed a Cavapoo puppy into their household.

We wish Callum every success in his burgeoning career and his leadership roles within the MJLD.

#1 Staff holiday booking system

Leave management software, trusted by the legal industry

Simplify some of the tedious HR tasks with our easy-to-use leave management software, from sick leave and holiday requests to employee records and document storage.



Free Trial whosoff.com

Email support@whosoff.com

Let's talk +44 (0)1227 812930



ADILA

Annual Dinner featuring Legal Awards

Liverpool Law Society's 2026
Annual Dinner and Legal Awards
will take place on Thursday, 12th November
at the Rum Warehouse, Liverpool

Liverpool City Region's lawyers are invited to come together to celebrate being part of a progressive and dynamic legal community.

Members and non-members can attend the Dinner.

Nominations for the 2026 Legal Awards will open in early July and close early September. Details on the categories appear opposite.

Bookings now open

SPONSORED BY

Benchmark



Landmark
Information



Miller

The
University of
Law

ADILA

The Legal Awards are back for 2026!

Open to members of Liverpool Law Society

Categories

- Outstanding Team Award - Dispute Resolution & Litigation
- Outstanding Team Award - Non-Contentious
- 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 eight categories to choose from, we are confident there is something for everyone. Nominations will open in early July and close in early September.

The winners of the 2026 Legal Awards will be revealed at a glittering black-tie ceremony during the Annual Dinner on Thursday, 12th November 2026.

For further information and to book tickets for the Annual Dinner and Legal Awards, [click here](#).

SPONSORED BY

A New Chapter: Hilton Spence Family Law



Laura Spence

Liverpool's legal community continues to evolve, and the launch of Hilton Spence Family Law marks an exciting addition to the region's family law offering.

Founded by **Laura Spence** - Director of Liverpool Law Society and current Parliamentary Liaison Officer - Hilton Spence is a boutique practice, specialising in all areas of private family law.

Having built her career over the last decade within leading firms in South Manchester and Liverpool, Laura developed a strong practice in financial remedy work - advising clients with significant and often intricate asset structures. She has also been involved in a number of reported cases during that time.

Alongside that technical work, Laura became increasingly clear that family cases were about so much more than just the law. That perspective, shaped by experience (and perhaps just getting older), prompted a simple but defining question: what would I want, if I were the client? The answer was not just expertise (although that was a given) but a reassuring and supportive approach.

The ethos behind the firm is therefore

simple: to deliver high-quality legal advice within a more personal, client-focused experience.

The launch of Hilton Spence is not just about a new firm—it's also a reflection of the strength and importance of the Liverpool legal community.

"In Liverpool we have a legal and professional community that genuinely wants one another to succeed" Laura says. "It's a community that supports, connects, and encourages people to grow. Hilton

Spence is very much a product of that environment - in fact, it exists only because of it."

That same sense of collaboration underpins the firm's approach. Hilton Spence works closely with trusted professionals across the region, reflecting the increasingly collaborative nature of modern legal practice and ensuring clients receive well-rounded, tailored advice.

Hilton Spence Family Law is now open, serving clients across the Wirral, Liverpool, and beyond—built within, and inspired by, the community that Liverpool Law Society continues to champion.



Bell Lamb & Joynson's Marcela Salter Wins Crime Leading Associate of the Year at Legal 500 Awards



Marcela Salter

Bell Lamb & Joynson Solicitors is proud to announce that Marcela Salter, Criminal Defence Solicitor, has been named Crime Legal Associate of the Year at The Legal 500 Northern Powerhouse Awards, recognising her outstanding contribution to criminal defence and her dedication to supporting clients through some of the most serious and complex cases.

Marcela brings more than three decades of experience in criminal law, having built a reputation for her resilience, compassion and depth of courtroom experience. Since joining Bell Lamb & Joynson in September 2021, she has become a highly respected member of the firm's Criminal Defence Team, known for her unwavering commitment to achieving the best possible outcomes for her clients.

Her recognition follows another milestone for the firm, after Bell Lamb & Joynson's Crime Team was ranked in Tier 3 in the Legal 500 earlier this year, reflecting the strength and reputation of the firm's criminal defence work across the region.

Originally from Chile, Marcela came to the United Kingdom as a refugee in 1975.

Fluent in both Spanish and English, she brings a culturally aware and empathetic approach to her work, particularly when supporting vulnerable individuals and those facing language barriers.

Marcela began her career in criminal law in 1989, initially working as an office junior before progressing through roles including Magistrates' Court Clerk and caseworker across both the Magistrates' and Crown Courts. While working full time, she undertook her legal studies at Liverpool John Moores University, completing both her LLB (Hons) and Legal Practice Course, before qualifying as a solicitor in February 2016.

Throughout her career, Marcela has worked on a wide range of serious and complex criminal matters, including cases involving serious violence, homicide, sexual offences, complex conspiracies, organised crime and prison law. Her experience also includes involvement in several high-profile cases that have attracted national attention, including the nationally reported **Brianna Ghey** case.

She is widely recognised for her calm and determined advocacy and her ability to build trust with clients during periods of significant stress and uncertainty.

Marcela holds Police Station Accreditation, is a Mental Health First Aider, and is currently awaiting the results of her Higher Rights of Audience examinations with the University of London, which will allow her to undertake advocacy in the higher courts.

Speaking about the recognition, Marcela said: *"Criminal defence work can be incredibly challenging but also deeply rewarding. Every client deserves to feel heard, supported and properly represented, regardless of their circumstances. I feel very fortunate to be able to do this work and to be part of such a dedicated team."*

Outside of work, Marcela has been married for over 27 years and has two adult sons. She often credits the support of her family as the foundation that has enabled her to build such a long and demanding career in criminal defence.



The BLJ Team at the Legal 500 Awards

Paul Crowley & Co Solicitors Celebrated at British Conveyancing Awards 2026



Nicola and Jenna (front row centre) with the Conveyancing team

Paul Crowley & Co Solicitors has once again been recognised on a national stage, receiving Highly Commended honours in two prestigious categories at the British Conveyancing Awards 2026. The firm was acknowledged for Residential Property Team of the Year - Boutique, and Conveyancing Firm of the Year - North, reinforcing its reputation for excellence within the property sector.

The British Conveyancing Awards celebrates the significant work carried out by conveyancers across the country, recognising those who consistently raise standards within the profession. The 2026 ceremony, held at Manchester Cathedral, brought together more than 400 professionals from across the conveyancing and wider property industry to honour firms and individuals demonstrating exceptional commitment, innovation, and client service.

Representing Paul Crowley & Co were Jenna Gall, Director and Head of Conveyancing, and Associate, Nicola Stevenson. Both play key roles within a team that has experienced significant growth and success over the past year, and their attendance reflected the collective effort and dedication of the entire department.

“This success reflects the collective effort across the team and the strong relationships we build with our clients,” said Nicola. “We understand every transaction is important, and we are committed to providing clear communication and support throughout the process. It is inspiring to see our work acknowledged at a national level.”

This latest recognition builds on the firm’s previous success, having also been Highly Commended for Conveyancing Firm of the Year - North in 2025. Over the past twelve months, the team has continued to evolve in response to increased demand, expanding with the recruitment of two highly experienced members of staff. This strategic growth has enabled the firm to maintain its high standards of service while managing an increasing volume of transactions across the region.

The commendations highlight the strength of Paul Crowley & Co’s approach to residential property. Combining technical expertise with personalised service, the team has built a reputation for delivering a seamless and supportive experience during one of the most significant transactions in a client’s life.

Jenna commented, “To be recognised in two categories at a national level is a fantastic achievement for our team. It reflects the hard work, professionalism, and commitment that every member of our conveyancing department brings to their role each day, it is incredibly rewarding to see that dedication acknowledged by industry experts.”

The firm’s continued success at the British Conveyancing Awards demonstrates not only its strong position within the North but also its growing influence within the wider legal sector. It’s an exciting time for Paul Crowley & Co, as part of a planned expansion, they are looking for talented individuals to join their award-winning team across a number of departments, ensuring it continues to deliver excellence in legal services across Liverpool and beyond.



DWF advises Walker Crips Group plc on recommended takeover by PhillipCapital UK



John Campion

DWF, the global provider of integrated legal and business services, has advised Main Market-listed Walker Crips Group plc on its recommended takeover by PhillipCapital UK Ltd by way of a court-sanctioned scheme of arrangement.

Walker Crips Group provides a broad range of financial products and services, including investment management, financial planning, self-invested personal pensions, and small self-administered pension schemes, share dealing and

structured investments.

The transaction was valued at approximately £5.96 million and was subject to a number of conditions, including the grant of change of control approval by the Financial Conduct Authority. The scheme became effective on 3 March 2026.

The DWF corporate team was led by partner **John Campion** and director **Jemil Visram**, supported by solicitors **Matthew Kernohan** and **Feras Alobaidli**. Litigation partner **Joel Heap** and associate **Victoria Harkness** advised on the court-sanctioned scheme of arrangement. Tax advice was provided by partner **James Cashman** and solicitor **Douglas Pyrke**, while director **Aaron Osborn** provided financial regulatory advice.

Walker Crips Group was advised on the financial terms of the takeover by Singer Capital Markets Advisory LLP.

John Campion, partner at DWF, commented: “We are delighted to have supported Walker Crips Group on this

strategically important transaction. The recommended takeover by its largest shareholder implemented by way of a scheme of arrangement, marks a significant milestone for the business and reflects the continued consolidation we are seeing across the wealth management sector. Our team worked closely with the independent directors of Walker Crips Group board to navigate the legal, regulatory and commercial considerations involved, and we are proud to have contributed to a smooth and successful outcome. This strategic move will provide Walker Crips Group with the financial strength and a stable platform from which to reignite their growth prospects.”

Sean Lam, joint chief executive of Walker Crips Group plc, said: “John, Jemil and the wider DWF team delivered outstanding legal guidance and support to the independent directors of Walker Crips Group throughout the transaction. Their advice was timely, clear, and commercially focussed, and they consistently identified practical solutions to complex issues. Their expertise and commitment have been instrumental in achieving a smooth and successful outcome for our shareholders.”



BASKERVILLE
eMEDIA

TEL : 0151 651 2776
simon@baskervillemedia.co.uk



Hall Brown Family Law Launches in Liverpool



Antonia, Ellie, Natalie, Vicky

The team at Hall Brown Family Law were delighted to welcome over 100 guests to their launch event on Thursday 19 March. It was held at NORD, the Northern/Scandinavian blended restaurant, chosen not only for its quality but also as it is based in the same building as Hall Brown.



As well as a chance to catch up with contacts across the city, guests were entertained by a caricaturist; watch out for the pictures on LinkedIn!

All aspects of business life in the region were represented at the event, from bankers to accountants to financial advisers, and also barristers and lawyers. In keeping with Hall Brown's ethos, a number of charities were also represented



including The Hive, Palm House, Marie Curie and Teenage Cancer Trust.

The Liverpool office opened in January this year, headed up by Natalie Dickson, a very experienced and highly ranked family lawyer (and a Liverpoolian born and bred!). She is joined by Senior Associate Antonia Williamson, Trainee Legal Executive Ellie Coffey, and Office Manager and Senior Legal PA Vicky Burnell. A formidable team offering clients the kind of support that Hall Brown has become renowned for across the country.

The team works closely with clients trying to resolve the breakdown of their relationships in as amicable and straightforward a way as possible. One of the common priorities is protecting



business assets which they might have invested immense effort in developing and might represent a family's biggest single source of wealth.

The office in Liverpool is the sixth in Hall Brown's family, strengthening its presence alongside offices in Manchester, London, Sheffield, Leeds and Birmingham. Hall Brown is a multi-award winning boutique firm delivering best-in-class family law services. Our team is selected for legal expertise and client care, ensuring responsive and empathetic support at challenging times. By taking on fewer clients, we remain focused on clear communication, transparent fees and practical solutions that achieve the best possible outcomes.

Our goal is to provide straightforward, value-driven advice and efficient resolution strategies, helping clients navigate complex family matters with confidence and peace of mind.



To find out more, please do contact Natalie and the team.

liverpool@hallbrown.co.uk
Tel: 0151 433 1177

DWF secures landmark Supreme Court victory in THG shareholder dispute



Joel Heap

DWF, the global provider of integrated legal and business services, has secured a major victory in the Supreme Court, successfully representing Zedra Trust Company Ltd in a high-profile shareholder dispute.

In a judgment handed down by a majority of four to one, the Supreme Court ruled that no statutory time limit applies to claims brought under section 994 of the Companies Act 2006. The decision settles an important legal question and will have wide-reaching implications for shareholders, boards and advisers throughout the UK who are involved in company disputes.

The appeal concerned Zedra's application to amend its existing section 994 petition to add a further allegation that it had been unfairly excluded from a July 2016 bonus issue of shares made by THG. By this amendment Zedra sought monetary relief by way of equitable compensation. THG argued that the new allegation was time-barred under the Limitation Act 1980, contending that a petition seeking solely monetary relief was an "action to recover a sum recoverable by virtue of an enactment", triggering the six-year limitation period in section 9.

The High Court held that no limitation period applied to claims under section 994. The Court of Appeal allowed the appeal and held that all petitions under section 994 are subject to a 12 year limitation period under section 8 of the Limitation Act and that claims for monetary relief under section 994 are subject to a six year limitation period under section 9. The Supreme Court has now reinstated the longstanding position that section 994 petitions are not subject to a statutory limitation period, whether or not monetary relief is sought.

By a 4-1 majority, the Supreme Court held that:

- A petition under section 994 CA 2006 is not an "action upon a specialty" under section 8 of the Limitation Act 1980.
- Nor is a petition seeking monetary compensation an "action to recover any sum recoverable by virtue of any enactment" under section 9 of the Limitation Act 1980.
- The broad remedial discretion in section 996, which allows the court to grant any relief it considers appropriate, is incompatible with applying a fixed limitation period tied to the form of relief sought.

Accordingly, no statutory limitation period applies to unfair prejudice petitions, including those seeking compensation.

The DWF team was led by managing partner of DWF in Manchester and national head of dispute resolution, **Joel Heap** and senior associate **Sam Pringle**, who instructed **Andrew Thompson** KC of Erskine Chambers and **George McPherson** of 3VB.

This judgment provides important and welcome clarification for shareholders, companies, and practitioners advising on historical allegations of unfair prejudice. It confirms that petitioners are not barred from seeking relief, including monetary compensation, simply because more than six years have passed since the underlying events.

Joel Heap, partner at DWF, said: *"This is a significant and very practical decision for minority shareholders and their advisors. The Supreme Court has re-affirmed what those specialising in shareholder litigation have understood for over 40 years, that there is no limitation period in unfair prejudice. DWF is proud to have advised Zedra on a case that has clarified the law at the highest level and will have lasting importance for shareholder disputes across the UK."*

This latest ruling follows DWF's recent success in the Supreme Court in the dispute between Dairy UK and Oatly, further underlining the firm's strength in complex, high-profile appellate litigation and its growing reputation in market-leading disputes before the UK's highest court.

For more information, please contact:
Katie McKeown, PR Executive
Tel: +44 7754 512460
Email: katie.mckeown@dwf.law

Individual and firmwide awards for Leigh Day at Northern Powerhouse Awards



Leigh Day has been recognised for excellent client service at the Legal 500 Northern Powerhouse Awards 2026, with personal injury senior associate solicitor William Broadbent also being awarded Insurance Leading Associate of the Year.

The Northern Powerhouse awards recognise high quality work undertaken by law firms in the north of England, with Leigh Day's offices in the region spanning Manchester, Liverpool and Leeds.

The ceremony, which took place on 12 March 2026 at the Royal Armouries in Leeds, saw the firm pick up the Client Service Excellence award, along with William's leading associate award.

William Broadbent – Insurance Leading Associate of the Year

William, based in Manchester, works as a senior associate solicitor in the firm's personal injury department and is part of the cycling injury team.

William has been at Leigh Day since 2017 and looks after cases ranging from cycling and road traffic collisions, to accidents at work and public liability claims.

He has worked on high value cases involving complex and life changing injuries, including traumatic brain and spinal cord injuries as well as amputations and fatalities.

In his time at the firm, William

has helped numerous clients secure multi-million pound settlements. These include settlements for brain injury involving a doctor, a poly-trauma case involving a cyclist, and a settlement for a fatal road traffic incident.

Client Service Excellence

Leigh Day received the Client Service Excellence award at this year's Northern Powerhouse ceremony.

The firm has received positive feedback from clients noting the level of dedication to achieving the best possible outcome for clients, along with a commitment to justice and delivering outstanding results.

The firm has also been commended by clients for the depth of knowledge and experience in its northern offices.

Alongside its legal case work, Leigh Day is undertaking an audience insights project

to better understand the motivations and behaviours of prospective clients, as well as what barriers might be in place to some people.

The firm also has a dedicated press team, which is able to offer support to clients whose cases come under the media spotlight.

Leigh Day partner **Clare Campbell** said: *"We are delighted to have been recognised again at the Legal 500 Northern Powerhouse awards, both as a firm and at an individual level. Supporting clients throughout what can be a long and difficult legal process is of great importance and something we pride ourselves on across the whole firm, and it is positive to see this recognised with the client service award. We're also hugely pleased for our solicitor William Broadbent, whose fantastic work in the personal injury department has been justly rewarded."*

Leigh Day senior associate solicitor **William Broadbent** said: *"It's a great honour to have been recognised at this year's Northern Powerhouse awards. I'm immensely grateful for the hard work and support of my team, as well as my colleagues across the whole personal injury department where everyone is working tirelessly to secure justice for clients."*



Clare Campbell



William Broadbent

Going further guides clients and practices towards cleaner environments



Eve Gallagher

As we quickly approach World Earth Day 2026, which this year comes around on April 22nd, it is just as important that we turn our focus on our own actions and standards as well as how we advise and guide our clients through such a complex world of compliance requirements.

The course of environmental regulations is an ever-changing landscape that can be difficult to navigate. While the eyes of the world are falling to policy makers and scientists to tackle climate change, in reality legal teams which also play a key role in protecting the planet. They do this by helping businesses navigate these regulations and embedding long-term sustainability into decision-making.

A large part of this role sits in our day-to-day work. Environmental regulations and compliance with them is increasingly complex, following the implementation of the UK Environment Act 2021. Focusing on emissions, waste and supply chains, to name just a few, our job is to interpret these requirements and ensure clients and organisations – and our own practice – understand what is expected of them and make this workable as part of their daily operations.

The best way to do this is to ensure we do the same as our clients in the ways in which we work. We do this by making sure internally that our environmental issues and compliance with regulations is at the core of business concerns.

Guaranteeing this can be so simple. It can be as easy as ensuring sustainability reporting is accurate or supporting internal policies that are already in place. As environmental factors become more about risk and governance, so our input and putting this in practice in our own work becomes increasingly important.

Many teams have already adopted changes such as these, yet going forward the role will change so that it sits between what is legally required and what is ethically responsible. While the legislative framework in the UK is continuously progressing, the climate crisis can often progress quicker. Should this continue, going beyond the standard terms of environmental compliance is undoubtedly the right action to take.

To assist organisations and clients of the same fast-moving landscape, we must understand the regulations placed on both us and them but always ask ourselves: what is coming next and how can we be ready for it?

Our legal teams are in the best position to foresee how increased scrutiny and tighter reporting may impact us all. This is where our value can be added, not just as advisers but as partners to help create more sustainable businesses for ourselves and clients.

So on World Earth Day 2026, we can draw from its theme of 'Our power, our planet'. Legal firms may not always be the most visible contributors to a cleaner environment in which we live, but the influence our teams can have with the right knowledge at their disposal should not be underestimated.

Eve Gallagher
Trainee Solicitor,
[MSB Solicitors](#)

ejm investigations

Private & Commercial Investigators and Process Servers EJM Investigations

are a North West based detective agency in Preston, Lancashire, with a team of private investigators and process servers across the UK. We can carry out private investigations, commercial investigations and process serving at home, throughout Europe and worldwide.

OUR SERVICES INCLUDE:

- Surveillance
- Trace Missing Persons
- Process Server
- Background Checks
- Criminal Defence
- Trace Debtors
- Vehicle Tracking

- Pre-Sue Reports
- Criminal Defence
- Employee Absenteeism
- Debtor Tracing
- Debugging
- Background checks and employee vetting

Tel: 01772 334 700

Mob: 07940 135 006

Email: info@ejminvestigations.co.uk

Web: www.ejminvestigations.co.uk

20 Years+

Experiences.
Professionalism.
Quality Results.

Established 2000



Strengthening the Local Business Community:

Knowsley Chamber's Focus on Leadership and Workplace Wellbeing



Jessica Ray Murphy, Rachel Peak and Alison Lobb

Knowsley Chamber continued to deliver a varied and busy programme of events throughout 2026. As part of this programme, two oversubscribed and strategically significant events took place in March, each reflecting the borough's ongoing commitment to professional development, inclusive leadership, and workplace wellbeing.

While distinct in format and focus, both events demonstrated a consistent objective, to support businesses in building stronger, more resilient organisations through collaboration, knowledge-sharing and investment in people.

International Women's Day Celebration – 11 March

Hosted at Allerton Manor Golf Club, the Chamber's International Women's Day event brought together over 80 professionals from across the local business community. The event provided a platform for discussion, reflection and shared learning, centred around this year's theme, "Give to Gain."

Jessica Rae Murphy, Working Well Business Engagement Manager at Knowsley Chamber, opened the session with a considered reflection on her professional journey. Her contribution focused on the importance of developing confidence, recognising opportunity and navigating early career challenges.

Alison Lobb, Managing Partner at Morecrofts Solicitors, followed with insights drawn from her extensive experience within the legal sector. She addressed the evolving responsibilities of leadership, particularly in fostering inclusive and supportive working environments, and highlighted the role organisations play in developing future talent.

Alison Lobb said: "The event was a reminder of the incredible strength and diversity within our business community. Bringing people together to share their experiences openly and honestly is so important. These stories help us learn from one another, challenge old assumptions and create workplaces that truly support women to thrive at every stage of their careers. I was honoured to be part of the conversation."

The event provided a valuable opportunity for attendees to engage with other businesses, exchange perspectives and consider how leadership approaches continue to evolve across sectors, including within the legal profession.

Working Well Marketplace – Supporting Healthier Workplaces

The Chamber hosted the Working Well Marketplace at the Shakespeare North Playhouse. The Working Well programme, funded by Knowsley Public Health and delivered by Knowsley Chamber since 2011, connects employers with a wide range of health and wellbeing resources designed to support their workforce.

The event featured over 30 exhibitors representing local services across physical health, mental wellbeing and organisational support. Employers were able to access practical guidance and explore initiatives that can be implemented within their own workplaces.

A series of speaker contributions provided additional context and strategic insight. Rachel Peak, CEO of Knowsley Chamber and Head of Business Growth at Knowsley Council, outlined the borough's

ongoing commitment to embedding wellbeing within its economic strategy. Esther Hindley, Principal Public Health Programme Officer, introduced new digital resources to support employers, while Councillor Christine Bannon, Cabinet Member for Health at Knowsley Council, reinforced the importance of workplace wellbeing in strengthening communities.

Further contributions from public health specialists and service providers highlighted practical interventions available to businesses, including smoking cessation support and guidance on managing operational pressures such as energy costs.

A Coordinated Approach to Business Support

These events are examples of how Knowsley Chamber take a structured and proactive approach to business engagement. By addressing both leadership development and employee wellbeing, the Chamber continues to support organisations in meeting the evolving demands of modern workplaces.

For the legal sector, where people, performance and professional standards are closely linked, the themes explored across both events are particularly relevant. Creating environments that support wellbeing and enable progression is increasingly recognised as central to long-term organisational success.

As Knowsley Chamber continues to develop its programme of activity throughout 2026, it remains focused on fostering collaboration, strengthening networks and providing practical support to businesses across the borough.

Membership and Engagement

Knowsley Chamber welcomes engagement from organisations across all sectors. For businesses seeking to expand their network, access support or contribute to a collaborative business community, further information is available via info@knowsleychamber.org.uk.

Liverpool Law Society Directors meet with Local MPs



Laura Spence

On Friday 13 March 2026, Liverpool Law Society held its first meeting of the year with local MPs.

These twice-yearly meetings provide an important opportunity to maintain meaningful dialogue about the legislative / policy

developments that impact both local practitioners and the communities they serve.

The Society welcomed not only by number of local MPs (and representatives) but also on this occasion **David McNeill**, The Law Society's Director of Public Affairs and Campaigns. **David** spoke about the widely reported proposal concerning the potential abolition of jury trials. Whilst there has to date been much discussion centred on opinion and reaction, during the meeting **David** offered valuable insight into The Law Society's approach – how it is engaging the Government on the issue, and how views are most likely to be communicated effectively and heard. It was a timely reminder that, even where we might not be seeing it publicly, work is always happening (sometimes behind the scenes) to protect fundamental principles of our justice system.

Lauren Cannon then spoke about the recent Schools White Paper "Every Child Achieving and Thriving". The discussion highlighted the broader implications of the proposed reforms, particularly in relation to equality of access, early intervention, and the long-term impact on children and families – issues that resonate strongly with many across our region.

We also heard from **Josh Bates**, who spoke to a number of recent consultation responses including protection of client money, the proposed change to the AML supervisory regime, and most recently interest on client accounts. **Josh** has taken the lead on a number of the responses submitted, which continue to be so important in ensuring the practical realities of legal practice are properly considered and reflected in any reform.

Finally, **Lauren** mentioned the recent response to the Parliamentary Written Question response (put by Liverpool

Law Society via **Marie Rimmer MP**) in respect of Skilled Worker Visas and Minimum Salary Thresholds. This item brought into focus once more the challenges now faced by North West businesses, including the risk of losing talent to London and other regions as a result of current requirements.

These meetings remain an important opportunity to ensure that the lived experience of practitioners and the needs of their clients, are part of the wider legislative discussion. Encouragingly, we are seeing increasing engagement from MPs and hope this continues to build. Liverpool Law Society remains committed to maintaining and strengthening these relationships, ensuring that the voice of our community is heard where it matters most.

Laura Spence
Parliamentary Liaison Officer

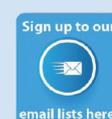
Not receiving emails from Liverpool Law Society?

Please check your junk or spam folder. Email providers constantly update their spam filters so even though you used to receive our emails, suddenly this might stop.

Our training, member and general news & events emails will come from legalnews@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk and automated messages from our website (such as when making a booking for one of our courses or events) will come from enquiries@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk.

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?





Liverpool Business and Property Courts Forum

Mr Justice Leech, Vice-Chancellor of the County Palatine of Lancaster will consider

Is cross-examination the “engine of truth”? *Gestmin* revisited, and the importance of oral evidence

We are delighted to confirm the Chancellor of the High Court will also be in attendance and speaking

Tuesday 21st April

From 17:00 - 18:30
Followed by drinks

Hundred Court Chambers
Exchange Station
Tithebarn Street
Liverpool
L2 2QP

Book your place [here](#).

CEO highlights why reliability is becoming the true measure of sustainability in insurance supply chains



Donna Richards

Carpenters Group CEO Donna Richards has shared new insight on why reliability and longterm stability are becoming the true measures of sustainability within the insurance and legal services supply chain.

In her article, *Why Reliability Matters More Than Ever*, Richards argues that sustainability is not only about ESG frameworks or reporting, but about confidence. For insurers, brokers and customers, it means knowing that the partners they rely on will endure through market shifts, regulatory change and fluctuating volumes.

The piece explores what makes a business genuinely sustainable in claims handling and legal services, pointing to financial strength, deep specialism and longterm thinking as the foundations of dependable delivery. Richards reflects on the importance of consistency in a highstakes environment, where insurers entrust partners with their customers, brand and reputation.

She also considers the role of technology and people in building resilience, highlighting the value of experienced teams and investment that genuinely improves outcomes, rather than shortterm gains that cannot be sustained.

The article marks the first in CEO Insights, a new monthly commentary series in which Donna Richards will share perspective on the issues shaping the insurance and legal services sector, drawing on operational experience from across the supply chain.

As the market continues to evolve, the article concludes that the most valuable partners will be those built on strong foundations - stable, scalable and steadfast - providing certainty in an increasingly complex claims environment.

Looking ahead: Upcoming Cohabitation Reform Spring 2026



Jayde Hampson

[Jayde Hampson](#), solicitor at Slater and Gordon, explores the latest legal news where the rights for cohabitating couples are being readdressed this Spring.

Cohabitation is becoming an increasingly common choice for couples, increasing year upon year. Despite this, the legal framework and protections in place for cohabiting

unmarried couples are limited.

Currently, unmarried cohabiting couples do not share the same legal rights as those who are married and can be left in a difficult situation if the relationship ends. This includes no automatic rights to property, inheritance and other assets without a will; as well as difficulties around financial protection or support following separation.

In March 2008, the Labour Government announced it would not be taking any action to implement the Law Commission's recommendations on cohabitation until research on the cost and effectiveness of a similar scheme in Scotland could be studied. In a separate report published in 2011, the Law Commission recommended some unmarried partners should have the right to inherit after each other's death under the intestacy rules, without having to go to court. This has not been implemented. In April 2018, the May Government said it would be

considering how to proceed in relation to the proposals but no further updates were provided.

In 2024, the Labour Party's manifesto pledged to strengthen legal rights and protections for those in cohabiting relationships. This commitment has been strengthened by The House of Lords who commented that a formal consultation will be issued in Spring 2026, which will look at what cohabitation reform should look like.

With the reform, it should address current issues to over consistent, fair family law across different relationship types. For now, cohabitating couples can take proactive measures to protect their interests such as outlining cohabitation agreements, drafting a will and defining property ownership. It is hoped that the consultation will be a step in the right direction which allow our legal systems to adapt accordingly to our evolving society.

Pathways into the profession



Jeremy Myers

We each had to make a first step on to the ladder which has taken us into our profession. Though for me it is forty two years ago, I can well remember my first week in a Solicitor's office as a Lower Sixth former. The first step is the hardest!

LLS's own annual online event provided such a step for about 220 Year 12 Students who registered to take part. They are at a range of 14 Schools and Colleges across Merseyside. The online nature of the event post-Covid means that the personal mingling at the venue is missed, but LLS

no longer has the location expense and the Schools do not have to organize and pay for a trip.

Eight accomplished speakers from all strands of the legal profession ranging from the Bar to Solicitors to CILEX – in academia and in practice – gave ten minute presentations. Topics included the options for the degree and apprenticeship alternatives to life in practice. There were useful tips given on how to prepare for apprenticeship applications and ways to become aware of what is involved in studying law.

Questions in the Chat box were few at first and then in the second Q & A session took off. We had some Questions ready which I raised with speakers to fill early gaps, so hopefully we covered most of the issues relevant for the students.

We have received some feedback which is most gratifying. **Belinda Halton**, a Teacher at Formby High School, wrote: *"I found the 10 minute presentation format worked well and allowed for students to have a clear overview of the different routes available to*

them". This year we applied some feedback from 2025: The presentations were pitched at the applicable level for students without detailed knowledge of legal study and wanting to discover how to look at the opportunities.

A special word of thanks must go to our four sponsors for their invaluable support including their staff as being speakers: Liverpool John Moores University, The University of Law, the University of Liverpool, and Weightmans. The preparation time taken in sourcing the speakers and liaising with the Schools is substantial, and once again our CEO **Sarah Poblete** and team excelled. A special mention must be made for our Past President **Emlyn Williams** whose brainchild this was in his Year.

Please spread the message about how much LLS and our members are doing to introduce young people to the possibility of a legal career.

Jeremy Myers

Chair

Education and charities Committee

MJLD charity bingo night success



Owen Russell

The Merseyside Junior Lawyers Division kicked off the year with its first charity event of 2026, and what a night it was.

Held at City Wine Bar on Old Hall Street on the 26th of February, our Charity Bingo

Night brought together junior lawyers from across the city for an evening that was as fun as it was meaningful. We were absolutely delighted to sell out the event and see so many familiar (and new) faces in the room.

This year, we are proud to be supporting Alfie's Squad, a truly inspiring, local charity set up by Alfie when he was just 14, following the loss of his dad to suicide. Through weekly activities and a supportive community based in the Baltic Triangle, Alfie's Squad provides a safe space for young people going through similar experiences, and it's a cause that clearly resonated with everyone who attended.

The night itself was full of energy, with plenty of laughs, a bit of healthy competition, and some great prizes up for grabs which included vouchers for

Liverpool Empire, The Tempest, City Wine Bar, Junkyard Golf, Reformer Club and YogaCita. As always, the event also gave people the chance to connect, catch up and meet others across the junior legal community.

Thanks to everyone's generosity, we're so pleased to have raised £600 for Alfie's Squad. It's a fantastic result and a great start to the year.

A huge thank you to everyone who came along and supported the event, and to the businesses who kindly donated prizes. We're already looking forward to the next one.

If you would like any information regarding our next Charity/Social events, please visit our website to become a member: <https://www.merseysidejld.com/>

Solicitors' Judges' Event, 12th March



On 12th March 2026, I attended a Solicitors' Judges' event held at Liverpool John Moores University Law Clinic on Hardman Street.

The event was organised by The Law Society of England and Wales, and we were honoured to be joined by **Polly Williams, Beth Quinn, William Temple,** and **Mark Evans** (President of The Law Society).

I was seated on a panel alongside Regional Tribunal Judge **Rosemary Lloyd** and the recently appointed Deputy District Judge, **Rachel Stalker**. Together, we shared insights from our judicial careers.

In 2024, I was honoured to be appointed as Senior Member (Chair) of the Valuation Tribunal for England, where I oversee a broad spectrum of property-related appeals within a panel framework. Since this appointment, I have gained valuable understanding of the court and tribunal processes, emphasising the judicial recruitment pathway. It has become evident that there is a notable underrepresentation of solicitors, particularly those from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds ("BAME"), progressing to judicial appointments, especially on the District Bench.

The primary purpose of the event was to encourage solicitors who may be

considering a career in the judiciary by providing relevant information regarding the application process and directing attendees to appropriate resources.

The panel responded to numerous questions from the audience, and we were fortunate to have several full-time Judges present in the room to offer their perspectives. Topics discussed included various initiatives available to solicitors, such as Judicial Mentoring, Judicial Work Shadowing, and the Pre-application Judicial Education Programme ("PAJE"), which both Rachel and I completed prior to our appointments.



Following the panel discussion, attendees had the opportunity to engage informally with judges for further guidance and advice.

Despite challenging weather conditions, the event was well attended, and I was pleased to participate. It is anticipated that similar events will be organised in the future.

Alum Ullah
Vice President LLS,
Training Principal & Solicitor
at Bond Turner



Liverpool Law Society Celebrates 2025 Award Winners and Sponsors at Fazenda Reception



On 26th February Liverpool Law Society had the pleasure of hosting our winners and sponsors of the Annual Awards 2025 at Fazenda. The winners were announced at the Annual Dinner in November 2025 and the February evening is a chance for Liverpool Law Society to say a big personal thanks to all our sponsors and a huge congratulations to our deserving winners. Our sponsors were: Benchmark Financial Planning, Clio, Fazenda, Landmark Information, Liverpool John Moores University, Miller Insurance and the University of Law, and the winners were:

Law Firm Award (50+ employees):

CEL Solicitors

Law Firm Award (1-49 employees):

Phoenix Legal Solicitors

Outstanding Lawyer Award:

Kevin Donoghue from Donoghue Solicitors

Equality Diversity & Inclusion Award:

In-House Legal Solutions

Rising Star Award:

Jessica Roberts from Fletchers Solicitors

Outstanding Team Award (Family Law): **Morecrofts Solicitors**

Outstanding Team Award

(Employment Law): **Morecrofts Solicitors**

Outstanding Team Award (Non-Contentious): **MSB Solicitors**

Outstanding Team Award (Dispute Resolution & Litigation): **DWF**



It is also a chance for the President of the Society, Sarah Mansfield, and her officers to thank local firms and chambers who host LLS meetings and events throughout the year for their support. A big thanks to all who attended and to Fazenda who made sure we were well looked after.

Nina Sahu
Deputy Vice President
Liverpool Law Society

The Evolving Consumer Law Landscape



Emma Collins

Consumer protection law in the United Kingdom is being reformed. Even since the Consumer Rights Act 2015 came into force, making much-needed updates, the law is struggling to keep up with developments of modern life. The Digital Markets, Competition and Consumers Act 2024 (DMCCA) largely came into force 12 months ago, intended to enhance the regulator's rights to pursue anti-competitive issues and to provide better protection to consumers. Although not binding, there has also been a steady stream of regulatory guidance from the Competition & Markets Authority (CMA) on emerging technology and ecommerce issues, providing welcome advice in rapidly-developing sectors.

As lawyers are already subject to regulation, some of these developments have little impact for our day-to-day business but are worth bearing in mind for clients selling goods or supplying services in the consumer sector.

If you advise, or advertise services to, individual clients not acting in the course of business, here are some key changes you should bear in mind:

Drip pricing

The DMCCA updates the previous law

relating to unfair commercial practices, which are essentially misleading or aggressive tactics that encourage a consumer to make decisions they would not otherwise have made about buying or cancelling services. Commercial practices are generally assessed on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the relevant facts and whether the average consumer would have been swayed in their decision-making. Certain practices, however, are automatically considered unfair, such as material omissions from any “invitation to purchase” (essentially a product advertisement). Pricing is explicitly stated as being “material” information. In a change from the previous law, the total price must be advertised - not simply a price to which additional costs are added after the consumer has agreed to the advertised price. If a total price cannot be determined upfront, the means of calculating additional charges must be made clear.

Where there is a choice to add extra services at an additional cost that would be fair as the consumer has not been misled and is not bound to pay the additional amount; the focus is on ensuring consumers understand the price they are committing to pay.

Fake reviews

In light of increasing volumes of online activity, the DMCCA introduces new rules relating to reviews. Publishing – or commissioning – fake reviews is also on the list of commercial practices that are automatically considered unfair.

Essentially, a “fake review” is defined as “a consumer review that purports to be, but is not, based on a person’s genuine experience”. Businesses should bear in mind that a “review” can take many forms, including videos published on social media and comments on websites. Although fake reviews are often presumed to be false endorsements to boost a product’s popularity, it is important to remember

the rules also apply to false negative reviews (for example, seeking to undermine a competitor’s offering) or reviews that are genuine but where the reviewer has been incentivised in some way and that incentive isn’t declared (for example, an influencer reviews a service that was provided free of charge but doesn’t disclose that fact to followers).

AI agents

Many organisations are experimenting with AI tools to improve efficiency and cut costs, often engaging AI agents to perform routine tasks such as handle online enquiries. In recent guidance, the CMA has highlighted that a business remains liable for breaches of consumer law by its AI agents in the same way as if its employees were engaging with individuals. Are consumers aware AI is being used? Does a chatbot recognise refund requests in line with consumer protection law? Does AI-generated marketing comply with advertising rules? Training and monitoring of any AI agent is crucial to avoid financial liability and potential damage to reputation.

Under the DMCCA, the CMA and other bodies may now take action without having to seek a court order and breach of consumer protection law can lead to fines of up to 10% of group turnover. Ensure you understand your obligations when dealing with individuals and keep consumer-facing sales and marketing activity under review.

Emma Collins

Principal Associate
Weightmans LLP

Carpenters Group marks International Women's Day 2026 with focus on collective progression

Carpenters Group has marked International Women's Day 2026 by examining how investment between women supports progression, strengthens teams and contributes to longterm organisational success.

Reflecting this year's International Women's Day theme, Give to Gain, the firm gathered insight from women across the business on development, confidence and leadership. The responses highlight the impact of practical support, including mentoring, sponsorship, shared experience and

advocacy, in helping individuals progress and perform with confidence.

Contributors also emphasised the role of workplace culture in enabling people to succeed, particularly environments built on trust, openness and mutual support. The ability to ask questions, challenge established ways of working and put oneself forward for opportunity was consistently linked to confidence and growth.

Experience and perspective were identified as key drivers of effective

leadership, alongside the importance of balance, resilience and learning through challenge. At senior level, the reflections focused on consistency, preparation and reliability as essential foundations for progress, particularly during periods of change.

The article concludes that when women invest intentionally in one another, the benefits extend beyond individual careers, shaping stronger teams, a more inclusive culture and sustainable progress across the business.

Fletchers launches maternity training grants programme to support maternity professionals

Specialist serious injury and clinical negligence law firm Fletchers Solicitors has launched a new grants programme aimed at supporting professional development for those working in maternity and neonatal care.

The Fletchers Maternity Training Grants Programme will provide quarterly grants of up to £300 to help midwives, obstetricians and other maternity and neonatal professionals attend training courses, conferences and professional development opportunities.

The initiative has been developed to support access to professional learning for those working in maternity services, recognising the important role that training, shared knowledge and continuing professional development play in improving maternity care.

Fletchers is one of the UK's leading serious injury and clinical negligence law firms, with one of the largest specialist birth injury practices in the country. The team represents families affected by life-changing injuries sustained during pregnancy, labour or shortly after birth, including complex cases involving cerebral palsy.

The maternity training grants programme reflects the firm's commitment to supporting professional learning across the maternity sector.

Trevor Ward, Partner and Head of Birth Injury at Fletchers Solicitors, said: *"Our birth injury team works with families who have experienced life-changing injuries, and through that work we see how important learning and professional development are within maternity care.*

We hope this programme will support maternity professionals in accessing valuable training opportunities and sharing knowledge that benefits their teams, their services and ultimately the families they care for."

The programme forms part of Fletchers' wider commitment to supporting families affected by birth injury and driving positive change across maternity care through its 'Every Birth. Every Baby. Every Family.' campaign, which focuses on learning and improvement in maternity services.

Further information about the programme can be found at:

<https://www.fletcherssolicitors.co.uk/medical-negligence/birth-injury-claims/maternity-grants-scheme/>

Liverpool to stage second 'Journey To Justice' legal summit



Panel discussion at the 2025 Journey to Justice event with Baroness Chakrabati (centre)

The second 'Journey to Justice' legal summit will take place at Liverpool Town Hall later this month.

Following the success of last year's inaugural event, which attracted nearly 200 lawyers, community leaders and charity representatives, Broudie Jackson Canter is once again hosting the conference in partnership with JUSTICE.

Broudie Jackson Canter is the longest-serving member of JUSTICE, a cross-party charity which works to build a fairer justice system built on evidence-based law reform.

This year's event will be held on Thursday, April 30 from 5pm to 8pm.

Among the confirmed speakers are **Baroness Hale of Richmond**, a former president of the Supreme Court, and **Baroness Chakrabarti**, a former shadow attorney general.

They will take part in a fireside chat and the evening will also feature an audience Q&A, drinks, canapés and networking.

The pursuit of justice will be in the spotlight with testimonies from people involved in high-profile campaigns, including the DES pregnancy drug scandal.



Esther Leach speaking at the 2025 Journey to Justice event

Esther Leach, managing director of Broudie Jackson Canter, said: *"Baroness Hale and Baroness Chakrabarti are two of the country's most respected voices on justice, equality and the rule of law. Their careers reflect decades of dedication to improving access to justice and protecting civil liberties."*

"We are honoured that they will be joining us for what is sure to be another memorable occasion and a highlight of the regional legal calendar. Last year's event proved a huge success, and we are proud and delighted to be staging our second Journey to Justice conference in the city."

At last year's event, JUSTICE unveiled

plans to establish a north of England division to give the region a greater voice in shaping UK law and policy.

The charity is forging ahead with the initiative and its regional office will be based at the HQ of Broudie Jackson Canter in Walker House, Exchange Flags.

Broudie Jackson Canter is a leading inquests and inquiries law firm, having represented families at the Hillsborough inquests, the Birmingham pub bombings inquests, the Covid-19 Inquiry and the Manchester Arena Inquiry. The firm has also been instrumental in shaping the Hillsborough Law.

It is part of the Jackson Lees Group, which has offices in Liverpool, Southport, Heswall and Hoylake. Jackson Lees Group is part of MAPD group, which was founded in 2020 by **Brian Cullen** and **Joanna Kingston-Davies** to power the growth of local law firms. The initials stand for Making a Positive Difference.

Places for the Journey to Justice event are limited.

For more information, contact **Julie Langtree** at Jackson Lees Group via jlangtree@jacksonlees.co.uk

Council Member's Report



Jeremy Myers

There are two updates as the March edition deadline was the day before Council's Strategic Planning Event on 24 February. The Law Society (TLS) is in the first year of its 2025-28 Plan. This one day in-person event was designed to assess progress on the current five topics and how they might be fine-tuned for year two.

72 of the 97 people attended and we looked at each of the five areas of the Strategy: Technology, Conditions for Growth, Access to Justice and Rule of Law, Responsible Business, and Member experience. There was one piece of Council business – as a hybrid event – which was to discuss and approve a proposal for a 2% increase in TLS's share of the Practising Certificate fee for 2026-27. This is going to consultation and to the Legal Services Board (LSB).

Newer members of Council are encouraged to play a role and I volunteered to chair breakout sessions on Responsible Business. We covered ethics, wellbeing and care developments and I fed back comments at a Plenary. Key issues highlighted in the workshop were recruitment and the juggling of work and family roles. TLS staff are formulating a review of the event which will be presented to Council on 07 May at its next meeting.

The actual Council meeting for the quarter was held on Wednesday

19 March. Non-agenda issues covered were TLS's lobbying on the Government Bill which proposes reducing the scope of Jury Trial offences plus the awaited Court of Appeal decision on the extent of practitioners approved for litigation conduct in Mazur. TLS's contribution to the Ministry of Justice's triennial review of the LSB was reported.



Sarah Rapson

My own view is that the main event was the visit of **Sarah Rapson** who is now four months into her role as CEO of the SRA. Sarah delivered a presentation at the end of the morning session and had a busy interaction with Council members over the lunch break. Sarah laid out her guiding principles for the SRA. First, getting the basics right. Second, seeking to solve matters before taking enforcement action. Third, pro-active pre-evaluation of potential difficulties. Fourth, looking at big issues and significant risks. My overall impression was of a realistic and collaborative approach being developed by the SRA.

Council members had been invited to place questions to Sarah. 104 questions had been submitted. Sarah responded to 11 topics. I was delighted that my question was one of those chosen: Does the SRA Compensation Fund have Re-Insurance Policy cover. Sarah replied that there is not such cover and that she would look at this, though noted that the discretionary nature of

payments from the Fund might affect this possibility. I shall keep you posted and I am happy to provide details about the 11 topics, most of which emerged from recent controversies about Axiom Ince and SSB.

Confidential business included three significant topics. These were the report of the extensive report of the SRA, the matter of how support might be developed for Solicitors facing Disciplinary Tribunal Proceedings and how to enhance Effective Decision Making in TLS.

Our 07 May meeting will be concluded by hustings for the election of a Deputy Vice President of TLS (who will become President in 2028). Council members will await notification of the names of the candidates, with nominations currently awaited. Many non-geographical seats are being elected this year with nominations closing on 06 May. Please do have a look at the vacancies to see if you might fit the description to stand for election.

I attended in person as I believe strongly that key personal relationships are built by attending and mingling if at all possible. About 48 members attended in person, with up to 45 attending online. Being on the spot helps one over time to get to know key staff at TLS. This meant that I have been able to refer **David McNeill**, Director of Public Affairs, to **HHJ Andrew Menary KC**, Recorder of Liverpool, for them to liaise about how Liverpool Crown Court has developed its efficiency. I am very grateful to Judge Menary for confirming that he can help.

So there is my take on the last two Council events. I am very keen to engage with our members. If you want to make a point – or to find out a little more about TLS – then let me know.

Jeremy Myers
Council Member

Save the date



LIVERPOOL LEGAL WALK

6PM, WEDNESDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER 2026

5k fundraising walk in aid of



The Access to Justice
Foundation



OUTHWAITE
& LITHERLAND

ESTABLISHED 1907

As expert Auctioneers & Valuers, Outhwaite & Litherland have been supporting North West Lawyers and professionals with valuations and advice since 1907.

We offer a complete probate valuation service, which now includes RICS accredited property valuations, in addition to the existing valuation service, estate sales and property clearance.

We hold a variety of specialist auctions during the year along side a catalogue of regular general household sales.

Outhwaite & Litherland are always just a phone call or email away and happy to offer free, friendly advice.

Outhwaite & Litherland
39-41 Hoghton Street, Southport, Merseyside PR9 0NS

Tel: 01704 538489
e: auction@lots.uk.com
www.lots.uk.com



International Women's Day Event – 5th March



On 5th March 2026, Liverpool Law Society welcomed attendees for our soldout International Women's Day celebration. The evening brought together professionals from across the region to reflect, connect and champion the experiences and achievements of women working within the legal sector and beyond. The event was kindly sponsored and hosted by Evelyn Partners. The event combined inspiring personal stories, expert insights and practical guidance and networking.



The programme opened with **Donna Scully** from Carpenters, who explored the transformative impact of mentoring and the value of lifting others up. Drawing from her own experience, she emphasised

how supporting someone else's progress often fuels our own development, and she spoke about her work with The Girls' Network, encouraging the women in the room to champion the next generation and create opportunities for those coming after them.



Financial wellbeing is a cornerstone of longterm empowerment, and this theme took centre stage during the session delivered by **Vicki Harper** and **Hayley Myers** of Evelyn Partners. Their presentation examined why women's financial journeys often diverge from men's, highlighting the cumulative effect of career breaks, the persistent gender wealth gap and the tendency

for women to underestimate their investing capability. They explored the importance of early saving habits, building financial resilience, navigating major life transitions such as midcareer pressures, divorce, illness and inheritance and developing confidence to approach investing with longterm steadiness rather than short-term fear. Through clear and relatable explanations, they demonstrated how even small monthly actions can significantly shape financial independence over a lifetime.



Executive coach **Denise Chilton** followed with a session on stress management that resonated strongly with attendees. She discussed where stress originates and how it affects thinking, confidence and behaviour. Denise then led an interactive Balance Wheel exercise, inviting everyone to rate different areas of their lives as a way of reflecting on priorities and identifying where change might be needed. Her session offered not only greater understanding but also practical, accessible approaches for navigating busy professional lives whilst prioritising wellbeing and developing resilience.

Following the first three sessions, we took a short break where delegates were able to network and mingle, exchanging reflections on the talks and forming new connections before the programme continued. The session resumed with **Laura Spence** from Hilton Spence Family Law, who delivered an honest and heartfelt account of her personal journey

into the legal profession. Her talk offered an unfiltered look at the moments that shape a career, from early experiences to finding confidence, belonging and purpose. Laura's reflections on "borrowing" confidence from others until her own developed resonated particularly strongly with younger practitioners in the room. Her story was a powerful reminder that the path into law is rarely linear, and that the support of those who believe in us can be genuinely transformative.

The final speaker, **Dr Catriona Wolfenden** from Weightmans, provided a thoughtprovoking exploration of the "squiggly career", reframing career development as a dynamic process of reinvention rather than a predictable ladder. She spoke about anchoring identity in skills rather than titles, giving oneself permission to evolve, seeking sponsors who actively advocate for progression and recognising that options create power. Her insights encouraged the audience to see career shifts, sideways moves and reinventions not as deviations but as deliberate and courageous decisions that reflect growth and adaptability.

Throughout the evening, the room was filled with energetic networking and delegates engaged not only with the speakers but also with one another,



sharing experiences, exchanging ideas and strengthening community ties. The atmosphere reflected a shared commitment to personal development, mutual support and continued progress within the profession.

Liverpool Law Society extends our warmest thanks to the evening's exceptional speakers; **Donna Scully, Vicki Harper, Hayley Myers, Denise Chilton, Laura Spence** and **Dr Catriona Wolfenden** for delivering sessions rich in honesty, encouragement and expertise.



We also give sincere thanks to **Nina Sahu**, Deputy Vice President of Liverpool Law Society, for hosting the evening, and to Evelyn Partners generously sponsoring and hosting this year's event.

We look forward to welcoming you to our forthcoming events throughout 2026 and are excited to host our International Men's Day event in November and to return next March for another inspiring International Women's Day, where we will once again come together to learn, celebrate and champion one another across our profession.

Kirsty Barker
Training and Events Manager

Shaping the Future: Legal Services and Regional Growth in Liverpool



On 12 March, the Law Society of England and Wales visited Liverpool to host *Shaping the Future – Legal Services and Regional Growth in Liverpool*, an event generously supported by **Weightmans**.

Designed to bring together senior figures from across the Liverpool City Region’s legal community, the session explored how professional legal services can drive innovation, skills development, and economic growth both locally and nationally. Attendees represented a broad cross-section of firms, reflecting the diversity and depth of the region’s legal sector.

A Data-Driven Picture of the Region

The discussion was chaired by **Mark Evans**, President of the Law Society of England and Wales, who opened with a detailed overview of the sector’s current landscape. The Liverpool City Region is home to 187 registered law firms, collectively generating around £700 million in annual revenue.

A closer look at the figures reveals striking patterns:

- 1% of firms account for roughly £250 million of total revenue.
- A further 3% of firms, each turning over between £10m and £100m, generate an additional £230 million.
- 36% of firms fall within the

£1m–£36m turnover bracket, contributing £180 million collectively.

- The majority—56% of firms—generate between £100k and £1m annually.
- The remaining 7% operate below the £100k threshold.

Firm size, measured by partner numbers, shows a similar distribution. Only 1.6% of firms qualify as large (26+ partners), while 4.3% sit in the medium bracket (5–25 partners). The overwhelming majority are small practices with up to five partners, underscoring the region’s strong foundation of independent and boutique firms.

The Wider Professional Services Landscape

Graham Bond, Chair of the Liverpool Professional and Business Services (PBS) Hub, followed with a broader perspective on the sector’s economic significance. The PBS industry comprises around 12,000 businesses employing approximately 96,000 people across the region.

While the sector has substantial growth potential in its own right, **Graham** emphasised its role as a cross-sector catalyst—providing the specialist expertise that enables other industries to scale. He highlighted the importance of understanding both vertical growth (the infrastructure,

technology, skills, and finance required for firms to expand) and horizontal growth (the widening of client bases and markets). The PBS Growth Hub aims to support businesses across both dimensions.

Looking Ahead: Liverpool and the Fourth Industrial Revolution

The final speaker, **David Meyerowitz**, Chair of the Liverpool Business and Enterprise Board, offered a wide-ranging reflection on the region’s economic journey. Liverpool played a defining role in the first and second industrial revolutions—through trade, transport, and telecommunications—but had a more limited presence in the third.

As the world enters the fourth industrial revolution, shaped by AI, data analytics, and advanced digital technologies, **David** argued that the Liverpool City Region has a renewed opportunity to lead. Professional services—and legal services in particular—will be central to enabling growth in key sectors such as automotive, aerospace, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, and maritime.

His message was clear: innovation will determine which firms thrive. Those that embrace new technologies, new ways of working, and new models of service delivery will be best placed to support the region’s next chapter of economic success.

James Mannouch

Immediate Past President



Emerging drug trends in the UK: Testing for new substances in the family courts

There were 5,565 deaths related to drug poisoning registered in England and Wales in 2024, the highest number since records began in 1993 and a 2.1% increase compared with 2023 ([Office for National Statistics, 2024](#)).

Concerns about rising drug-related harm have also been highlighted by the [National Crime Agency](#), which has warned that the UK has “one of the highest rates of drug deaths in Europe.” Its Director-General, **Graeme Biggar**, said “*there has never been a more dangerous time to take drugs.*”

What drugs are now commonly being used?

The spike in deaths is partly caused by novel psychoactive substances (NPS), a catch-all term for a diverse range of synthetic drugs which are on the rise across the UK. These include opioids, cannabinoids, benzodiazepines, stimulants and hallucinogens that are designed to mimic the effects of traditional illicit drugs and often significantly more potent.

Nitazenes are just one example of these. They are often mixed with party drugs or street drugs such as cocaine, synthetic cannabis or heroin, the latter of which has become both much scarcer and more expensive in the UK [due to a crackdown in opium production in Afghanistan](#).

The high potency of nitazenes, reportedly up to 500 times stronger than heroin, together with their low manufacture cost and ability to evade detection using standard analytical methods, have contributed to a significant rise in the use of NPS. In some cases, consumers knowingly switch to these substances, while others may unknowingly obtain drugs that have been adulterated with, or replaced by, NPSs.

In October 2024, the [Office for Health Improvement and Disparities](#) reported that nitazenes were responsible for 195 deaths in the UK in 2024, four times higher than in 2023. The number could potentially be significantly higher than is reported,

due to the ever-evolving nature of these types of drugs and the lack of knowledge some drug users have regarding the combinations of substances they are taking.

The recent detection of synthetic cannabinoids in electronic cigarettes (vape pens) marketed as containing THC, the psychoactive component of cannabis, also highlights a concerning trend in the adulteration or substitution of THC products with synthetic cannabinoids, resulting in consumers unknowingly ingesting novel substances.

Many toxicology labs cannot test for novel drugs

Because the types of NPS on the market change so frequently, there is generally a lag between identification, classification and establishing accredited methods to analyse them. This can mean that many labs are still testing for a particular compound when drug use trends have moved on to something else. Notably, the ONS has stated that the proportion of drug-related deaths about which it, “[holds no information on the specific substances involved](#),” has been, “[increasing over time](#).”

In family court proceedings where drug use is a concern and testing is required, these information gaps can present significant challenges. The lag between the emergence of new substances and their inclusion in standard testing panels means that some drugs being used by a parent or guardian may go undetected, and therefore unreported. Novel substances also present difficulties for local authorities and the courts, as it may be unclear which drugs should be the subject of testing. In many cases, the individual using the substance may themselves be unaware of exactly what they have taken.

How can FTS help with testing for novel or illicit drugs?

FTS has one of the most comprehensive accredited drug panels in the UK forensic toxicology market and can test for:

- 43+ compounds tested as standard

- 15 stimulants/hallucinogens
- 2000+ additional compounds including novel psychoactive substances, regularly updated
- Synthetic cannabinoids (spice); FTS is the only company in the UK testing for the synthetic cannabinoid ADB Butinaca, currently one of the most used in the UK
- Pregabalin and Gabapentin, highly addictive and often overlooked prescription drugs
- FTS is also one of the only providers testing for MDPHP, the active ingredient in the drug more commonly known as ‘Monkey Dust’, which has been responsible for several deaths in Stoke on Trent and around the Midlands

Supported by a programme of continual development to address evolving drug use patterns in the UK, it is the only laboratory in this sector able to reliably detect novel substances as they emerge and reappear on the illicit market.

How to instruct FTS to test for novel drugs:

Through the use of FTS’s drug panel, relevant and emerging compounds can be reliably detected, reducing the risk of public funds being spent on testing for outdated synthetic substances. More importantly, it helps ensure that novel drug misuse is not overlooked and that children are protected from unnecessary risk.

In circumstances where drug use is suspected to be a safeguarding issue, particularly NPS use, or where it is unknown what substances may be being used, FTS is able to screen for 2000+ compounds alongside the requested routine panel, which is accredited to ISO/IEC 17025 and Lab 51. Depending on the compounds detected, FTS may be able to provide additional information regarding use/exposure patterns through further analytical method development.

Continues over page...

Emerging drug trends in the UK continued...

By providing accurate, comprehensive forensic toxicology and expert interpretation, FTS helps ensure that decisions are made in the best interests of children and their families. These services are Legal Aid Authority (LAA) compliant, and we offer a LAA Indemnity Guarantee should there be any shortfall in reimbursement.

FTS experts provide reports within 8 days from the sample arriving at our lab. We can also provide expert witnesses for court appearances.

For information on how FTS can support your testing for novel drugs, including nitazenes or monkey dust, contact us on 01924 480272 or email expert@forensic-testing.co.uk

References

Joshi, A. (2024) UK has one of the highest

rates of drug deaths in Europe as National Crime Agency warns about rise of synthetic opioids. Sky News, 15 August. Available at: <https://news.sky.com/story/uk-has-one-of-the-highest-rates-of-drug-deaths-in-europe-as-national-crime-agency-warns-about-rise-of-synthetic-opioids-13197427> (Accessed: 11 March 2026).

Office for National Statistics (2024) Deaths related to drug poisoning in England and Wales: 2023 registrations. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulation-andcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/bulletins/deathsrelatedtodrugpoisoninginenglandandwales/2023registrations> (Accessed: 11 March 2026).

Office for National Statistics (2025) Deaths related to drug poisoning by selected substances, England and Wales. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulation-andcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/bulletins/deathsrelatedtodrugpoisoninginenglandandwales/2025registrations> (Accessed: 11 March 2026).

[andcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/datasets/deathsrelatedtodrugpoisoningbyselectedsubstances](https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulation-andcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/datasets/deathsrelatedtodrugpoisoningbyselectedsubstances) (Accessed: 11 March 2026).

Office for National Statistics (2025) Deaths related to drug poisoning in England and Wales: 2024 registrations. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulation-andcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/bulletins/deathsrelatedtodrugpoisoninginenglandandwales/2024registrations> (Accessed: 11 March 2026).

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2025) Afghanistan's opium production falls to record lows amid drought and sustained ban enforcement. Available at: <https://www.unodc.org/coafg/en/stories/2025/afghanistan-opium-production-falls-to-record-lows-amid-drought-and-sustained-ban-enforcement.html> (Accessed: 11 March 2026).

Insights on the latest UK labour market statistics from DWF



Joanne Frew

Latest labour market indicators point to a shifting economic landscape, with key employment metrics showing notable movement. The UK employment rate was estimated at 75.1% in November 2025 to January 2026. This is up in the latest quarter and above estimates of a year ago. The

UK unemployment rate was estimated at 5.2% in the same period. This is up in the latest quarter and above estimates of a year ago. Overall, these figures represent the ongoing challenges in the labour market. Together, they paint a picture of an economy adjusting to structural pressures with increasing pace.

The estimated number of vacancies in the UK has remained broadly flat across recent periods, early estimates for December 2025 to February 2026 suggest a small decrease of 6,000, to 721,000, compared with September to November 2025. This stalling also reflects a marked hesitation among employers to expand their workforce, driven by the heightened uncertainty and additional obligations created by the strengthened employment protections under the Employment Rights Act. Vacancy levels are emerging as an early barometer of employer confidence in a more regulated operating environment.

Annual growth in employees' average earnings in Great Britain was 3.8% for regular earnings (excluding bonuses) and 3.9% for total earnings (including bonuses) in November 2025 to January 2026. This represents the slowest pace of pay growth in five years, highlighting a cooling in wage momentum at a time when household budgets remain under pressure. With prices being pushed higher by ongoing instability in the Middle East, inflationary pressures are expected to intensify, meaning employees are increasingly likely to seek higher wages to protect their living standards, while many employers are simultaneously grappling with the same rising cost pressures across their operations. This growing tension between wage expectations and affordability is likely to become a defining feature of 2026 pay negotiations.

The implementation of the Employment Rights Act 2025 is now fully underway, with initial reforms already in force and a further substantial set of changes scheduled for April 2026. These shifts are inevitably shaping labour-market behaviour, contributing to a more cautious outlook as employers balance rising operating costs, reduced workforce flexibility, and an increasingly complex compliance environment.

Joanne Frew,
Global Head of Employment & Pensions at DWF

Jodie Comer and Stephen Graham, the actors who look upstream as well as downstream

Prima Facie chases the real stories that lie beneath

Liverpool's Playhouse Theatre was rocking towards the end of March for five sold-out evenings. There was laughter, anger, tears, frustration, and at the end of each evening, a passion that things needed to change.

The script of such emotion? *Prima Facie*, written by Australian lawyer **Suzie Miller** and featuring just one actor, **Jodie Comer**, famous for playing the Russian assassin Villanelle in the huge hit series *Killing Eve*. In 2022 she won an Olivier award for her London performance of the play and a Tony award on Broadway a year later. Now she has been filling nine different theatres as she tours the play across the UK and Ireland, culminating in her final performances in her home city of Liverpool this month.

Comer is on the stage for 100 minutes and plays a bright, witty, vibrant working-class Liverpool woman, Tessa. She goes to Cambridge University, reads Law and then becomes a highly successful barrister. She often defends men who are up on sexual assault or rape charges. She talks of “*legal truth*”, the tricks of manipulating a jury, and there is plenty of laughter along the way.

Then comes the anger. On an evening out with a colleague from work, she is raped. The play tells the story of what she is put through. The delay of over two years for the trial, the interrogations, the insinuations. Is the rapist on trial, or is she the victim on trial? Anger, tears, frustration, and a very clear message is conveyed: the system is not working, something needs to change.

Why did Comer take on this role? She says: “*When I read the script, I was terrified about the demands, but I was also so moved by the issues involved. The situation with rape cases is shocking, and this play so brilliantly points up the problems. I was also delighted to help with the education*

package around the play. The hope is that young men, especially, will learn about consent and also that the legal system will change. So it was an honour to take it to the West End in London and then to Broadway, and also now around the country. I hope it makes a difference.”

Archbishop Desmond Tutu famously said, “*There comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find out why they're falling in.*” *Prima Facie* both tells the story of how the legal system is failing victims of sexual assault and rape, and it also wades upstream to study the causes. The play partnered with the Schools Consent Project, founded by barrister **Kate Parker** to send lawyers into schools to discuss with pupils the crucial upstream issue of consent around sexual activity. In Northern Ireland, any judge taking on rape trials is mandated, as part of their training, to watch a recorded version of Comer's performance in *Prima Facie*.

Another actor, **Stephen Graham**, heard about a young girl in Liverpool being stabbed and killed by a 14-year-old boy. Then, a few weeks later, he heard of another young girl being stabbed and killed by a young boy in London. Graham's response? “*I wanted to know what is going on? Why is this happening? So I rang Jack Thorne.*” With **Thorne** as writer and **Graham** as actor alongside a brilliant cast the Netflix drama *Adolescence* was born. It sought to show the possible upstream influences on a young boy that can lead to such a tragic downstream outcome. It was the Number One show on Netflix and has rightly won numerous awards.

Like *Prima Facie*, it doesn't just tell a story. It raises the question ‘why?’ Like *Prima Facie* it has led to moving, honest conversations in families, in workplaces. It has raised many questions, including the issue of just what is accessible on the internet. **Graham** plays Eddie, the father of

13-year-old Jamie, who kills his classmate Katie. Eddie discovers that to think his son is safe in his bedroom is to fail to realise that he could be being influenced by material on a screen.

There is a third drama that featured both **Jodie Comer** and **Stephen Graham**, which seeks not just to tell a story but to ask why and how this story is happening. The writer was again **Jack Thorne**, and the film *Help* told the story of Sarah, a care assistant played by **Jodie Comer**. She loves her job, she loves the family feel of the care home. She cares for Tony, played by **Stephen Graham**, who has early-onset dementia. Then Covid happens, and the story is told of what the care system had to cope with. Do we value people in the care sector? Are they treated with respect, with dignity? The Government, through their policies during Covid, pushed people into a nightmare stream and the most caring of care workers couldn't always pull them out.

Every play, every television drama, every film, communicates something. Jack Thorne calls the TV set in the corner of the living room “*an empathy box*”. And it is fine if the message is simply humour and entertainment. But if the message is to shine a light on a situation, to tell a story, and also to ask why this story is unfolding the way it is, to look upstream as well as downstream, then that is a very important drama. It deserves to be taken around the country playing to sold-out audiences or shown on prime-time television. If we want to make the world a fairer, better, more loving, more beautiful place then we need to look upstream as well as downstream and be very grateful for works like *Prima Facie*, *Adolescence*, and *Help* and for actors like **Jodie Comer** and **Stephen Graham**.

Henry Corbett
Liverpool Vicar,
Chaplain to Everton Football Club.



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

2 Child UC Limit Finally Lifted

From 1st April, the two-child limit, which has restricted support in Universal Credit and Child Tax Credit to a family’s first two children, will be scrapped. This policy, first introduced in 2017, has been the biggest contributor to the rise of child poverty in the UK today, affecting 1 in 9 children. The end of this policy has been predicted to lift over 450,000 families out of poverty. For many families, there will be immediate impact as the new support will be automatically applied. The policy change forms part of a wider government strategy, including expanded free school meals and childcare support which collectively should address long-term structural and persistent poverty within thousands of households throughout the country. We welcome this policy change with open arms as we have seen first hand how the two-child limit has brought such adversity to so many families’ lives.

Free welfare advice to over 65’s

Statistics show that in a single year, £2.8 billion of Pension Credit and Housing Benefit goes unclaimed by older people and over a third (37%) of pensioner households entitled to Pension Credit are not claiming it.

Some older people feel if they are a homeowner or have a small private pension that they will not be entitled to anything which is not the case.

We want to ensure that older people are receiving the benefits they are entitled to and deserve by providing a free welfare advice specifically for people aged 65 or over.

Please share with your networks and get in touch with us if you or anyone you know may benefit from this service.

Renters Rights Case Study

With the impending implementation of the Renters Rights Act, due May 2026, we have noticed an increase of people coming to our drop-ins with Section 21 notices.

Our client attended our drop-in session at Liverpool Civil & Family Court seeking advice on a Section 21 Notice. He had lived in his privately rented home for over ten years and felt the Section 21 was retaliatory as he had complained about disrepair in the property. He was also being threatened with illegal eviction as he was told to leave the property before

The flyer features the Merseyside Law Centre logo and the Independent Age logo. It includes a photograph of three people sitting together. The main headline reads 'Free Welfare Advice for Over 65s'. Below this, a teal banner states 'Many people over 65 are missing out on benefits they're entitled to'. The text continues: 'We're here to help. We offer free advice and support with applying for benefits, including:'. A list of benefits follows: Pension Credit, Council Tax Reduction, Housing Benefit, and Attendance Allowance. It also mentions that appointments are available at offices or via home visits. Contact information is provided: website (www.merseysidelawcentre.co.uk/over65welfareadvice), phone (0151 452 2495), and email (gabriele.ciuzelyte@merseysidelawcentre.co.uk). A QR code is included with the instruction 'or use your phone camera to scan the QR code'. At the bottom, there is a small disclaimer: 'Merseyside Law Centre is a charity registered in England and Wales. No part of our income or assets is for the private inurement of any individual. We are a not-for-profit organisation. Registered office: 100, South Street, Liverpool, L1 1JF. Tel: 0151 452 2495. Email: info@merseysidelawcentre.co.uk. Website: www.merseysidelawcentre.co.uk. Charity No: 1131282. Registered in England and Wales. No. 03069422. Registered in Scotland. No. SC14282. Registered in Northern Ireland. No. NI070000000. Registered in Jersey. No. 1131282. Registered in Guernsey. No. 1131282. Registered in the Isle of Man. No. 1131282. Registered in the Channel Islands. No. 1131282. Registered in the British Virgin Islands. No. 1131282. Registered in the Cayman Islands. No. 1131282. Registered in the Falkland Islands. No. 1131282. Registered in the Gibraltar. No. 1131282. Registered in the Hong Kong. No. 1131282. Registered in the Macao. No. 1131282. Registered in the Marshall Islands. No. 1131282. Registered in the Micronesia. No. 1131282. Registered in the Mongolia. No. 1131282. Registered in the Nauru. No. 1131282. Registered in the New Zealand. No. 1131282. Registered in the Niue. No. 1131282. Registered in the Norfolk Island. No. 1131282. Registered in the Northern Mariana Islands. No. 1131282. Registered in the Palau. No. 1131282. Registered in the Papua New Guinea. No. 1131282. Registered in the Pitcairn Islands. No. 1131282. Registered in the Samoa. No. 1131282. Registered in the Singapore. No. 1131282. Registered in the South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands. No. 1131282. Registered in the Sri Lanka. No. 1131282. Registered in the St. Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha. No. 1131282. Registered in the St. Kitts and Nevis. No. 1131282. Registered in the St. Lucia. No. 1131282. Registered in the St. Vincent and the Grenadines. No. 1131282. Registered in the Sudan. No. 1131282. Registered in the Suriname. No. 1131282. Registered in the Taiwan. No. 1131282. Registered in the Tajikistan. No. 1131282. Registered in the Tokelau. No. 1131282. Registered in the Tonga. No. 1131282. Registered in the Tuvalu. No. 1131282. Registered in the United Arab Emirates. No. 1131282. Registered in the United Kingdom. No. 1131282. Registered in the United States of America. No. 1131282. Registered in the Uzbekistan. No. 1131282. Registered in the Vanuatu. No. 1131282. Registered in the Wallis and Futuna. No. 1131282. Registered in the Western Sahara. No. 1131282. Registered in the Yemen. No. 1131282. Registered in the Zimbabwe. No. 1131282.'

the notice expired. Our client had numerous, serious mental and physical health issues and his mobility was severely restricted. The threat of homelessness exacerbated his physical and mental health conditions to the point where he was experiencing regular panic attacks.

When our client initially presented to the drop in, he was very scared about being evicted. After reviewing his documents, we were able to establish that the Section 21 was not valid. Furthermore, we were able to source information from the Liverpool Licensing and Regulation Portal which showed us that his landlord had not applied for a selective license for the property. We were able to provide him with a valid defence once possession proceedings commenced and report the landlord to the local authority private sector

housing team to investigate the lack of license and disrepair. Our client was very grateful for our support and felt that without early legal advice, he would have been left street homeless.

This case perfectly illustrates the importance of early intervention and free legal advice. Without our assistance, the client may have ended up street homeless which would have been extremely detrimental to their mental and physical health.

Volunteer & Donation Opportunities

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

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

Whatever your skills or experience, please do not hesitate

to get in touch if you want to make a difference to the lives of people in your community and have a passion for social justice.

To download our Volunteer Application Pack, please visit [Get Involved | merseysidelawcentre](#) and e-mail the completed form to enquiries@merseysidelawcentre.co.uk

With the current cost-of-living crisis, our services are now needed more than ever. If you could consider donating to Merseyside Law Centre, it could make a massive difference to many people's lives in Merseyside. Our donation details are up on our website www.merseysidelawcentre.co.uk/donate

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

Twitter: @MerseyLawCentre

Facebook: Merseyside Law Centre

Instagram: @merseysidelawcentre

Bluesky: @merseysidelaw.bsky.social

Merseyside Law Centre

@Merseyside Law Centre
merseysidelaw.bsky.social
@merseysidelawcentre

www.merseysidelawcentre.co.uk

LET US BE YOUR HELPING HAND

WHAT DO WE DO?

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

OUR SERVICES

<p>Free Advice Drop In Sessions</p> <p>Every Monday & Thursday 10am-12pm No appointment required.</p> <p>Dovecot Multi Activity Centre, Back Dovecot Place, Liverpool L14 9BA</p>	<p>Free Housing Possession Advice Drop In Sessions</p> <p>Every Wednesday & Friday 11am-1pm No appointment required.</p> <p>Liverpool Civil and Family Court 35 Vernon Street, L2 2BX</p>
--	--

Please bring all relevant documents with you to any drop-in sessions.

If you are unable to attend a drop in, please fill in the enquiry form on our website. Link below.

www.merseysidelawcentre.co.uk/online-enquiry-form

Merseyside Law Centre Limited is a company registered in England & Wales under company number 09862302 and a registered charity, number 1199464. Registered office: Merseyside Law Centre, The Kuumba Imani Millennium Centre, 4 Princes Road, Liverpool, L8 1TH.
The solicitors of Merseyside Law Centre are regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority.

Merseyside Law Centre | Ministry of Justice | LEGAL AID | SQM | THE ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOUNDATION

FREE HOUSING ADVICE

IMPROVING OUTCOMES THROUGH LEGAL SUPPORT AND HOUSING LOSS PREVENTION ADVICE SERVICE

- ✓ We offer free legal advice and representation if you have received a notice seeking possession of your home from your landlord or mortgage lender and if you are being evicted.
- ✓ We can provide early advice and assistance and representation if your home might be at risk.
- ✓ We can represent you on the day of your hearing or help you in advance if you contact us before the date of your hearing.
- ✓ If your landlord has issued a claim for possession we can help you to defend the claim.

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

HOW TO ACCESS OUR SERVICES

DROP INS. NO APPOINTMENT REQUIRED. PLEASE BRING ALL RELEVANT DOCUMENTS WITH YOU.

Liverpool Civil and Family Court 35 Vernon Street, L2 2BX	Wed & Fri 11am-1pm
Dovecot Multi Activity Centre, L14 9BA	Mon & Thurs 10am-12pm
Kuumba Imani Millennium Centre, 4 Princes Road, L8 1TH	Wednesday 10am-12pm

Online enquiry form available here.

A dog-walker's tale



Paul Findell



Anglia Research, Global experts in probate genealogy, provide friendly and affordable people finding services to legal professionals across the UK. Our specialist team trace thousands of missing heirs on a Global scale as well as tracking down lost documents and assets.

This article tells of how **Paul Findell**, Case Manager at Anglia Research, Southport, was able to reunite a brother with his long-lost sister after death.

In 2024, Paul was asked to investigate the estate of **Jean Marion Rowland**, who was believed to be the widow of **John Rowland**, having been born in India in the 1930s and dying in Chester. His first objective was to identify her marriage and then find potential birth or baptisms in India, although initial searches proved fruitless. There were no likely marriages or British births in India that could have been her, which made for a challenging case.

Paul recalls how his first breakthrough

came when he found a record for a Jean Rowland travelling from Liverpool to Canada in 1960. The record stated that she was single and gave a home address in Litherland, just north of Liverpool. On closer inspection, he discovered that the date of birth matched exactly so he started looking for births in the Liverpool area - and found who he thought to be her. Paul was able to confirm that Jean was in fact born in Liverpool and this allowed him to trace her family - a brother and nieces from another brother who had recently died. However, there were still a number of unanswered questions - why had she been described as a widow, and why did her death certificate say she was born in India?

Jean's family were able to confirm that she had emigrated to Canada when she was twenty-three and married an Italian - American, but that they had divorced. They knew she had been quite the traveller, but she hadn't maintained much contact with her family, and nobody had heard from her in decades. They had presumed that she had died in Canada at some point, so it came as a significant shock to learn that that she had been living only a few miles away in Chester. However, despite the information they could provide, still nobody could explain anything about a husband called John, or the assertion about a birth in India. Paul decided his best chance to uncover this mystery would be to trace and contact the informant on Jean's death certificate and this is where her full story unfolded. The informant turned out to be Jean's dog-walker, who she had known for about twenty years. Whilst 'Marion', (as she knew Jean), was a private person, the woman had learned a fair amount about her over the years. Jean had said that her father had served in the British army in India and that she had emigrated to Canada when she was a young woman. She had married a man

who she referred to as 'Johnny' and had had two children: a son who died in a boating accident when he was 13 and a daughter who was a doctor but had been killed in Afghanistan. Jean had decided to return to England for financial reasons, living in Woking whilst working in a hotel and then moving to Chester, where she lived for over 20 years.

Jean had maintained that she had no family until the end of her life and had asked that her ashes be scattered in the River Mersey. Her dog-walker honoured these wishes, and registered Jean's death with what information she had. Jean's birth in India had been assumed from the proud stories she had told about her father serving there, and as her dog-walker had always known her as Mrs Jean Rowland, she had assumed this to be her married name, her husband being John Rowland.

Subsequent research revealed that she had married a **Mr Del Bianco** in the 1960s, and had reverted to her maiden name in the early 1980s. Whilst her lost children were never substantiated, Paul was able to put the dog-walker in touch with Jean's brother so that he could learn more of his long-lost sister.

Paul Findell
Case Manager
Anglia Research

.....
For research you can rely on, call Anglia Research Services today on 0800 033 4034, 01704 333350 (Southport), 01473 350 350 (Ipswich) or at legal@angliaresearch.co.uk quoting LP001



Anglia Research

Global Experts in Probate Genealogy Est.1979

Research you can rely on

Supporting Liverpool Law Firms with genealogy services for over 40 years

Anglia Research provides fast, friendly and affordable people finding services to legal professionals. Our specialist Southport and Ipswich based teams trace thousands of missing heirs in the UK and around the world, as well as tracking down lost documents and assets.



Finding Missing Beneficiaries



Family Tree Verification Service



Estate Distribution Guidance



Fixed-cost International Bankruptcy Searches



Undertaking Statutory Will Research



Financial Asset Searches



Tracing Property Owners



Missing Beneficiary Insurance Quotations



Document Procurement and Will Searches



Free Administrator Search

Contact us to find out more:  www.angliaresearch.co.uk

 legal@angliaresearch.co.uk  Southport: 01704 333350  Ipswich: 01473 350350

Regulation Update

April 2026

The latest Regulation news from Andrea Cohen of Weightmans LLP



Andrea Cohen

March saw a series of developments highlighting increasing regulatory pressure on solicitors, particularly (but not unusually) in relation to antimoney laundering supervision, client accounts and practice authorisation, alongside continued fallout from the Mazur decision on reserved legal activities.

AML enforcement: tougher treatment of law firms

The enforcement gap between the legal and accountancy sectors continues to widen. A report by the Office for Professional Body AntiMoney Laundering Supervision (OPBAS) shows that law firms are subject to significantly more inspections and materially higher fines than accountancy practices. Legal regulators carried out substantially more onsite visits during the most recent reporting period, 2023/24, with average fines for law firms many times higher than those imposed on accountants.

For solicitors, the message is clear: AML supervision remains a priority area for the SRA, with increased inspections and enforcement activity likely to continue. We reported extensively last year on the increasing number and level of fines, and there's already been a raft of letters to firms from the SRA in the first 3 months of this year regarding inspections (desk

based and in person visits), so it's likely the number of investigations will rise in the run up to the FCA taking over the work of all 25 organisations responsible at present. Firms undertaking high risk work, particularly conveyancing and transactional matters, should expect ongoing scrutiny and ensure that risk assessments, policies and controls are demonstrably effective.

If you've not yet had an independent AML audit, or not had one recently, now is the time to get one booked in. While you can't turn the clock back, you can get your firm into the best position possible before an SRA visit and prior to the FCA taking over.

Client account interest levy: cost risks for the profession

The MoJ consultation on its proposal to introduce an Interest on Lawyers' Client Accounts (ILCA) scheme and retain 50% of the interest generated on individual client accounts, and 75% on pooled client accounts, which would be remitted into central funds, closed on 9 March 2026, with representative bodies (including the Law Society and regional societies) continuing to oppose the plan, arguing it will increase costs, hit high street firms disproportionately and may push clients to unregulated providers. Without saying whether it was in favour of the scheme or not, in its response to the consultation, the SRA emphasised the operational and financial implications for both the SRA and solicitors, warning that the government proposals could result in higher costs for the regulator and, ultimately, the profession. The SRA highlighted that there may be a need for new IT systems, additional data collection, and ongoing enforcement activity. As the SRA is funded through practising certificate fees, it cautioned that these costs may need to be passed on to firms if the proposals proceed.

Conveyancing: HMRC tax adviser registration may be deferred

Further regulatory uncertainty emerged for conveyancers following HMRC guidance confirming that firms submitting stamp duty land tax returns will fall within the new mandatory tax adviser registration regime. While the requirement is currently expected to apply from May, there are growing indications that registration for parts of the financial services sector may be deferred, raising hopes that conveyancers could benefit from a similar postponement. The Law Society has warned that imposing registration requirements on conveyancers risks slowing transactions and adding unnecessary complexity to already heavily regulated processes. Firms involved in property work should continue to monitor developments closely.

Mazur fallout: limits on who can conduct litigation

The professional consequences of the Mazur ruling continue to unfold. In March, a senior and highly experienced family lawyer was prevented from acting in Children Act proceedings after the court refused to grant an exemption allowing her to conduct litigation. The decision reinforces the strict interpretation of reserved legal activities following Mazur even where removal of a practitioner causes practical difficulties for clients. Judgment in the Appeal was reserved, with no date, as at the date of writing, for it to be handed down. Firms must ensure that only properly authorised individuals conduct litigation and that supervision arrangements comply with current regulatory guidance.

Disciplinary roundup

March also brought a number of significant disciplinary decisions, underlining continued regulatory focus on client money, authorisation and professional integrity.

Client accounts used as banking facilities

An international firm was fined £18,000 after staff allowed its client account to be used as a banking facility during a commercial property transaction. The SRA found that payments were made from the client account that were not connected to an underlying legal transaction, creating a risk of substantial harm. While the misconduct was not found to be deliberate or reckless, the case serves as a reminder of the strict limits on the use of client accounts.

Dishonesty and exceptional circumstances

A solicitor who admitted lying during a secretly recorded meeting avoided being struck off after the SDT accepted that he had acted to protect a client under

extreme pressure. The tribunal imposed a suspension, stressing that the outcome was based on exceptional circumstances and should not be taken as a signal of greater tolerance for dishonesty.

Unauthorised practice

A partner was suspended for nine months after running an unauthorised sole practice for more than three years. The tribunal found that clients had been placed at risk as a result of her practising without authorisation and holding client money when not entitled to do so, emphasising the importance of maintaining proper authorisation at all times.

Serious client account misuse

A City solicitor who had sole access to one of the firm's accounts to which he transferred funds from the client account,

was struck off after falsifying bank statements to conceal a £2.1 million client account shortage and misappropriating almost £1m. The tribunal found extensive dishonesty, including misappropriation of client funds and deliberate attempts to mislead regulators, and misleading clients who believed he had safeguarded their money. He was struck off and ordered to pay £65,000 costs.

How Compli can help...

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

Andrea Cohen
Compli,
Weightmans LLP

OUR SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

We offer sponsors



- AVENUES TO SHOWCASE THEIR PRODUCT ATTRIBUTES IN A TARGETED MARKET AREA.
- OPPORTUNITY TO CROSS BORDERS & SHARE COMMON VALUES.
- TO INTEGRATE YOUR PRODUCT OR SERVICE INTO THE ACTIVITIES OF LIVERPOOL LAW SOCIETY.
- POSITIVE PUBLICITY WHICH HELPS CREATE HEIGHTENED VISIBILITY OF PRODUCTS & SERVICES.



Reach
—
2400
members of
the legal
profession

Liverpool Law Society



“Liverpool Law Society has always been a pleasure to work with. The team always go above and beyond to help sponsors achieve their objectives in supporting the Society, always keeping the members at the centre of everything they do.”

<https://www.liverpoollawsociety.org.uk/services/sponsorship/>

ENQUIRE

Charity Spotlight: Make it happen Birkenhead



What does Make It Happen do?

We provide our community with venues that house several offers that anyone can use, be involved in and benefit from. These include:

- A pay as you feel shop, pay as you feel for products that include all ages clothing, shoes bags and other items such as hats and dress jewellery.
- A social supermarket where we sell intercepted food, usually destined for landfill at heavily discounted prices.
- Bespoke Volunteer CARE programme for all our community members using an asset-based community development model (ABCD).
- Work placements for community members and university/college students.
- A Vibrant village living room which is a second premises for anyone who wishes to run community activities, workshops, meetings or pop-up events, as well as any individuals and artisans who would just like to use this space.
- This space also facilitates programmes for the community and opportunities for personal development and growth.

We are Make It Happen, and this is our Manifesto:

We are community makers and collaborators, empowering people to challenge the status quo, inequality, and learned behaviours. We work in the heart of the community to make life easier for local people through food, clothes, creativity, health, and happiness. We treat everyone with dignity and care; our community is built on trust and resilience. We are a constant in a difficult world, opening our doors to all-even those excluded from other services. Asset-Based Community Development is at our core. We work at the speed of trust and renewed confidence. With an ethos of “Give and Gain” We encourage people to get involved and shape everything we do. We want a community that is proud to live, work, learn, and play in Birkenhead. We nurture talent, supporting and empowering people to thrive in all aspects of life through choice and contribution. We believe everyone deserves love, hope, and harmony for their future. By growing a network of kindness with courage and honesty, we are committed to making it happen one step at a time, leaving footprints for others to follow.

Testimonials:

“I knew of Make It Happen through Amy as we used to feed the fans in the Tranmere tent over the last few years. I offered to help Make It Happen.

For the last few weeks, I have been part of a WhatsApp group where Make It Happen coordinate food and donation pick-ups and drop offs. Standard procedure with Amy and the team though, means you end up getting involved in a raft of other stuff. It’s been fun and kept me active whilst things have been difficult in the community for individuals shielding and self-isolating, by safely picking up donations from people, they have said things like ‘taking these bags of clothes has helped sort my head out because clearing isn’t fully done until it leaves the house’ and ‘it’s been nice to see a smile at the door and glad these are going to a good home”
- **Niall**, Team Member

“I was asked if I would like to be part of the Wellbeing project, and I thought it sounded good as I wasn’t sure if I was looking after myself in the best way. The project really helped me by giving me new experiences and made me care more about how I feel when I leave the house. One amazing experience was having a free salon session, I hadn’t realised how much of a difference having someone care about how you look and wanting you to look your best would make. I feel so much more confident and I know much better how to help myself feel better by taking care of my body and appearance a little bit more.” - **Anon**, Community Member







72-74 Market Street, Birkenhead, CH41 5BT

Open Monday to Friday
9.00am till 5.00pm

Saturdays 9.30am till 1.30pm



- Affordable food - different every week!
- ‘Pay as you feel’ clothing
- Friendly, family environment

- Volunteer with us!
- Gain new skills and give back.
- Signposting support

We are a community hub, retail shop and social supermarket situated in Market Street and Argyle Street Birkenhead and we are here for everyone in the local community. We accept donations of clothes and shoes, we also offer pick ups for donations on the Wirral.

Real — Engaging — Respectful

Call our shop on: 0151 306 4840 or text Bee on 07458302051

CARE@makeithappenbirkenhead.co.uk




Open 6 days a week
Calenders available
in our shop or scan
the QR code below

**Make It
Happen.**

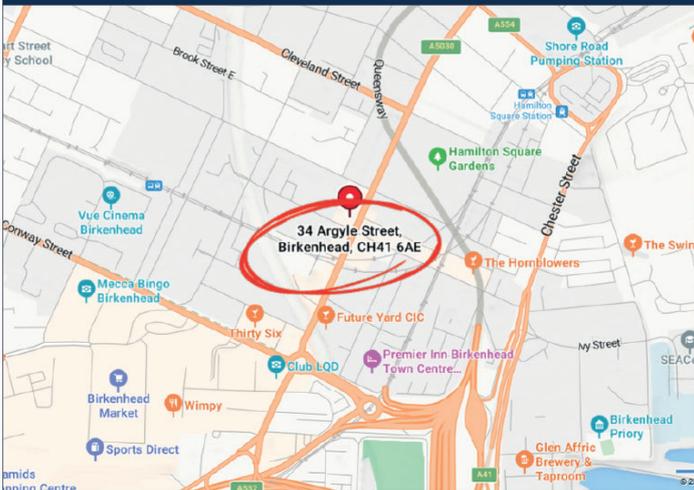
VIBRANTVILLAGE



Join Us...

In our community 'Living Room' for laughter, learning and taking the lead in our community!

- Join our Community Board Panel
- Digital Skills
- Social Activities
- Life Skills
- Volunteering
- Trips and more!



We offer a diverse range of community-led activities, including cooking, digital skills training, and arts and crafts. Additionally, we manage our Volunteer Development program, CARE, as we strive to foster Citizen Stewardship within our community.



07458306349

34 Argyle Street, Birkenhead, CH41 6AE

www.makeithappenbirkenhead.co.uk

vibrantvmih@makeithappenbirkenhead.co.uk

facebook.com/mihbirkenhead



Five Years Cyber Secure: XPress Legal Services Leads the Way for Local Law Firms



Lynne Lister

XPress Legal Services North Cheshire Merseyside and Manchester has achieved Cyber Essentials Plus accreditation for the fifth consecutive year, reaffirming its unwavering commitment to maintaining the highest standards of cyber security.

This milestone comes as the company marks what it calls the Year of AI: Actual Intelligence – a focus on showcasing its client winning blend of advanced technology with the irreplaceable value of human expertise.

Technology continues to play a vital role at Warrington based XPress Legal Services. The firm is investing in new tools that enhance efficiency and support legal clients across the region. However, the company is clear that human judgement, local knowledge, and personal relationships remain at the heart of its service model.

“Almost universally across our client portfolio, we’re seeing rising concerns around compliance, data protection and cyber security,”

...commented **Lynne Lister** of X-Press Legal Services North Cheshire, Merseyside and Manchester.

“Local law firms and conveyancers are increasingly looking for service partners who can demonstrate robust, independently verified standards. Achieving Cyber Essentials Plus for the fifth year gives our clients exactly that reassurance. It shows that we’re not only meeting their expectations but exceeding them, providing the confidence that the sensitive data they trust us with is always handled securely and responsibly.”

X-Press Legal Services’ commitment to combatting cyber threats cements its position as a trusted partner for law firms seeking a rigorously tested and reliable search provider. Opting to attain Cyber Essentials Plus over the standard Cyber Essentials accreditation, X-Press demonstrated how their enhanced security controls protect internal company data alongside that of every law firm it partners with.

“Protecting data is not only a matter of maintaining client trust but also a regulatory requirement for legal firms,” added Lynne. *“By taking a proactive approach to cyber threats we can safeguard legal firms’ clients’ information and maintain the integrity of their operations at every turn.”*

X-Press Legal Services North Cheshire Merseyside and Manchester offers regulated property searches and reports, quotation management tools, compliance and insurance products, plus other essential services that streamline the conveyancing process from start to finish.

The firm also supports ongoing professional development for conveyancers through regular Continuing Professional Development (CPD) events, webinars and publications delivering expert guidance, reliable data and innovative technology at every stage.

For more information call 01925 393 333, email central.7377@xpresslegal.uk, or find forthcoming CPD events at xpresslegal.co.uk.



X-Press Legal Services®
Your professional property partner

If you like our technology, you'll love our people

With 27 offices across England and Wales, X-Press Legal Services is the largest independent property search network and a trusted, friendly partner to hundreds of legal practices since 1998.

Our local owners have an in-depth knowledge of their area and we provide a wrap-around service including residential & commercial searches, pre & post completion services, cyber security, compliance products and much more.



Client onboarding and case progression platform

- ID, AML and Proof of Funds checks
- Legal forms
- Land Registry submission
- SDLT submission



Pre-post completion conveyancing platform

- Indemnity insurances
- Home buyer and seller protection
- Property searches and reports
- CPD training and webinar provider



X-Press Legal Services®
Group



Client direct payment facility



The latest in legal compliance

To find out more, simply get in touch

T: 01925 393333 | E: hello@xpresslegaluk | xpresslegal.co.uk



The Solicitors' Charity announces Wealthbrite's membership of Firm Friends

The Solicitors' Charity is pleased to announce that Wealthbrite has joined Firm Friends, the corporate giving scheme for the sector, launched last year.

Firm Friends enables law firms, legal suppliers and partners like Wealthbrite to join a programme that helps to fund direct support for solicitors, from therapy to emergency grants, and career coaching after redundancy to practical help during illness.

By joining, organisations are recognised as champions of wellbeing and part of sector-wide positive change.

At the same time, the charity is also expanding its approach to corporate and sector fundraising, introducing new ways for law societies, legal firms, suppliers and partners to play a more visible role in supporting the wellbeing of solicitors across England and Wales.

Nick Gallagher, CEO of The Solicitors' Charity, said: "Life in the law rarely presents a single challenge. Pressure can build over time professionally, personally, and financially. When support is visible and trusted, concerns surface earlier, and careers are more likely to remain sustainable.

We are delighted Wealthbrite has been among the first to demonstrate commitment to wellbeing in the legal sector through its membership of Firm Friends. We are aligned in terms of values and both organisations are committed to supporting sector health – in all its forms.

With Firm Friends along with an expanded range of corporate giving options, we hope our colleagues within the profession and suppliers to the sector will find it even easier to support our vital work in a way that fits with their organisation."

Carla Hoppe, Founder of Wealthbrite, said: "Becoming a Pioneer member of



Carla Hoppe and Nick Gallagher

Firm Friends reflects a natural alignment between the work we do at Wealthbrite and the mission of The Solicitors' Charity. Through our work with law firms across the profession, we see first-hand how financial pressure can affect people's confidence, wellbeing and decision-making at work. The Solicitors' Charity provides vital support when individuals face difficult periods in their lives and careers.

For us, joining Firm Friends is about standing alongside that work and playing our part in strengthening the profession's overall wellbeing. While the charity provides essential support in times of need, our focus at Wealthbrite is on building financial confidence earlier in people's careers so that fewer individuals reach crisis point.

Together, that combination of prevention and support helps strengthen the long-term resilience of the profession.

Being part of Firm Friends allows us to contribute to that broader ecosystem of support for solicitors across England and Wales, while also helping raise awareness of the resources available to those who may need them."

As regulatory change, economic pressure and rising client expectations continue to increase strain across legal practice, the charity has three straightforward ways to get involved:

1. **Firm Friends** – structured annual corporate giving
2. **Charity of the Year** – 12-month partnership programmes or single gifts
3. **One-Off Giving** – flexible donations and sponsorship opportunities

Since 1858, The Solicitors' Charity has supported solicitors through emotional, physical, professional, and financial challenges. Support ranges from counselling and therapeutic services to short-term financial assistance, professional guidance during career transition, and help in navigating periods of acute pressure.

It encourages others, like Wealthbrite, join in standing alongside the profession and provide visible support. Read more about the ways to get involved at: <https://www.thesolicitorscharity.org/play-your-part/>.

Criminal court delays remain high denying people in Liverpool timely justice

New analysis by the Law Society of England and Wales about the time it takes to process criminal cases in Merseyside shows that court delays remain high affecting communities across the region*. The UK government must implement a broad package of measures and provide sustained investment in the justice system to repair this vital public service that we all rely on.

The pre-pandemic average time from offence to case completion in the criminal courts (2016-2019) was 548 days in Merseyside**. These delays affect every stage of the justice process and contribute to undue stress and uncertainty for those involved.

Delays rose sharply in 2021 and 2022. In the years that followed, the average duration settled back to around pre-pandemic levels at 556 days (2023 and 2024):

- 2016: 573 days
- 2017: 611 days
- 2018: 541 days
- 2019: 469 days
- 2020: 439 days
- 2021: 629 days
- 2022: 618 days
- 2023: 556 days
- 2024: 556 days

According to the most recent 2025 data, in quarter one, the average number of days from offence to case completion was 587 and in quarter two 503***. Liverpool Crown Court has worked innovatively to speed up domestic abuse cases and some drug offences, resulting in an increase in early guilty pleas and significant time savings for courts and lawyers****. Despite some improvement, delays in Merseyside remain high leaving victims, witnesses and defendants waiting for a long time for cases to conclude.

Mark Evans, president of the Law Society, is visiting Liverpool on 12 March to



Mark Evans

discuss the findings and hear directly from solicitors about the challenges and opportunities facing the profession today. He said: “While it is encouraging to see delays in Merseyside criminal courts down to pre-pandemic levels, cases are still taking too long to conclude. Delays of well over a year leave victims, witnesses and defendants in limbo and continue to undermine confidence in the justice system, which is a crucial public service.

“Local legal communities and high street law firms play a vital role in keeping the system moving. But they cannot do this alone.

“The government must continue to provide sustained investment in Liverpool’s courts to ensure that recent improvements are not lost and that there is proper access to justice for everyone.”



* Timeliness measures reported here are mean average days across all closed cases heard in the magistrates and Crown Courts, from offence to completion. Timeliness at the magistrates’ courts measures the time from an offence being committed through key stages of the criminal justice system including charge or laying of the information, first listing and the subsequent completion of a defendant’s case at the magistrates’ court. End-to-end timeliness at the Crown Court measures the time from an offence being committed through key stages of the criminal justice system including charge, passage through the magistrates’ courts and subsequent completion of a defendant’s case. The estimates are created by linking magistrates’ courts and Crown Court data outputs to create an ‘end-to-end’ defendant journey across key stages of the criminal justice system. More information can be found here: [Criminal court statistics quarterly: July to September 2025 - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/criminal-court-statistics-quarterly)

**The Law Society of England and Wales carried out new analysis of publicly available data that can be found in the criminal court statistics quarterly and the CJS Dashboard. Further data, including median figures, can also be found here. <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/criminal-court-statistics-quarterly>https://criminal-justice-delivery-data-dashboards.justice.gov.uk/improving-timeliness/courts#outstanding_cases_12m--about<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/topics/research/state-of-the-courts-solicitors-views-in-2025>

***The 503 days from offence to completion included an overall duration of 141 days for cases in the Crown Courts and 30 days in the Magistrates’ Court in Merseyside.

****Read the Law Society’s response to Brian Leveson’s independent review of the criminal courts.

Forthcoming Courses

****NEW****

MULTI DELEGATE DISCOUNT FOR MEMBERS

In September we launched our brand-new members-only benefit - 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.

DATE	EVENT	SPEAKER
15/04/2026	2026 Public Child Law Conference	Various
21/04/2026	Divorce And Financial Orders Certificate	Safda Mahmood
22/04/2026	2026 Clinical Negligence Conference	Various
29/04/2026	Commercial Property Update	Hannah Mackinlay
30/04/2026	All About Alphabet Shares	Jackie Sheldon
06/05/2026	2026 Costs Conference	Various
13/05/2026	2026 Private Client Conference	Various
19/05/2026	Exploring Detrimental Whistleblowing: An Expert Talk by Flora Page KC	Flora Page KC
20/05/2026	2026 Domestic Abuse Half Day Conference	Various
21/05/2026	2026 Housing Conditions Conference	Various
04/06/2026	LLS Foundations Series on Successful careers Are Built Through In Person Collaboration	Various
10/06/2026	Private Children Law: 2026 Update	Safda Mahmood
10/06/2026	Public Children Law: 2026 Update	Safda Mahmood
17/06/2026	Civil Litigation Update	Andrew McLoughlin
17/06/2026	Personal Injury Update	Andrew McLoughlin
23/06/2026	Third Party Harassment: Rights, Liabilities and Future Developments	Rebecca Jones

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

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

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

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



Public Child Law Conference

Wednesday 15th April 2026, 9.30am till 3.30pm
Hybrid Event - Online or In Person

Join us for the 2026 Public Child Law Conference, bringing together leading practitioners and specialists for a comprehensive and practice-focused update on the key challenges shaping public child law today.

The finalised agenda features an exceptional line-up of experts covering critical topics such as formulating effective questions for experts to address evidential gaps, understanding HRA injunctions where notice is given to remove children from parents or carers under final care orders, and examining whether the 26-week limit remains fit for purpose. Delegates will also gain valuable insights into interpreting drug and alcohol testing results, receive a 12-month update on the FDAC model, explore trauma-informed approaches to public child law cases, develop practical skills for working with families experiencing poverty, and learn best-practice approaches for supporting parents going through care proceedings.

[BOOK NOW](#)

Kindly Sponsored By  **Forensic Testing Service**



Family

Divorce And Financial Orders Certificate

with Safda Mahmood

Online, 21st April, 10:00am - 4.00pm



Join us for an in-depth session designed to strengthen your expertise in the law, practice and procedure in finance and divorce matters. This event will keep you up to date with significant statutory and case law developments. Gain confidence in managing divorce and financial cases, learn to draft documents with precision and efficiency, and develop the ability to apply key criteria to real-world scenarios. Perfect for practitioners seeking practical insights and enhanced competence in this complex area of family law.

The course will be of benefit to those delegates who seek to put the theory of family law into practice. It will be of assistance to those who are new to this area of law, and those who want a refresher.

[BOOK NOW](#)



2026 Clinical Negligence Conference

Wednesday 22nd April 2026, 9.30am till 3.30pm
Hybrid Event - Online or In Person

This year's Clinical Negligence Conference delivers a fast-paced and comprehensive overview of the most important developments shaping the field, offering delegates clear, practical guidance across every stage of clinical negligence litigation.

The programme features James Miller with an essential update on fixed costs and hourly rates, followed by a session on the latest developments in fatal accident claims. Chris Gutteridge of Exchange Chambers will explore evidence and proof in his session "Prove it!", while Charlene Turner of Peak Costs provides clarity on managing Intermediate Track Costs in clinical negligence cases. Delegates will then gain unique insight from Rob Macadam in "From Operating Theatre to Court Room", examining common themes and experiences from a general surgery expert witnesses. The day concludes with Aneurin Moloney of Gatehouse Chambers delivering a detailed legal update reviewing key decisions from 2025 and what practitioners should expect in 2026.

[BOOK NOW](#)

Kindly Sponsored By 



Property

Commercial Property Update

with Hannah Mackinlay

Online, 29th April, 9.30am - 12.30am



In 2024, we witnessed significant changes for commercial real estate lawyers, and we can anticipate even more impactful developments from the new Labour government. Many firms are preparing for upcoming changes.

This half-day online session will prepare you for what's ahead by covering the latest developments in leasehold reform, EPC proposals and their impact on service charges, rent reviews, and alterations, as well as major Supreme Court changes on squatters' rights. You'll also explore updates on commercial lease renewals, deposits and drop-dead dates in conditional contracts, overage and lender priorities, SDLT reclaims, general case law trends, and what the future may hold for commonhold. Stay informed, anticipate challenges, and ensure your practice is ready for the next wave of change.

[BOOK NOW](#)



Company & Commercial

All About Alphabet Shares

with Jackie Sheldon

Online, 30th April, 1.00pm - 2.30pm



This online course will provide an understanding surrounding share classes (including a discussion of different types of shares and an appreciation of class rights). It will practically identify how to create a different class of share and provide a step-by-step guide to follow.

This online course will cover the following:

- Analysis of different classes of shares and examples of methods to draft share particulars
- Extracts from real life articles of association showing how different share classes may be used (and appreciation of why Alphabet Shares may be utilised in practice)
- Case law on alphabet shares
- Practical process to create different classes
- Variation of class rights

This course is appropriate for paralegals, junior solicitors, accountants or company secretaries that are involved in advising on share capital.

BOOK NOW



2026 Costs Conference

Wednesday 6th May 2026, 9.30am till 3.00pm

Hybrid Event - Online or In Person

Join us for the 2026 Costs Lawyers Conference, a must-attend event offering practical insight into the latest developments shaping the costs landscape.

The programme features a comprehensive legal round-up reviewing key cases from the past year, including updates to the CPR, alongside an in-depth look at Part 36, track allocation and fixed costs, with recent guidance from the Court of Appeal in *Laura Attersley v UK Insurance Ltd* [2026] EWCA Civ 217. We will also examine the important decision in *Duffy v Birmingham City Council* [2026] EWCA Civ 146, focusing on effective engagement with the costs assessment process and avoiding common pitfalls, with actionable strategies for both paying and receiving parties. Additional sessions will explore fundamental dishonesty and its costs consequences, as well as the latest updates in solicitor-client costs.

BOOK NOW



Private Client Conference

Wednesday 13th May 2026, 9.00am till 4.00pm

In Person Event at Crowne Plaza, Liverpool

Join leading experts and fellow professionals for an in-depth exploration of key developments in Private Client law, designed for legal practitioners, estate and financial planners, investment and wealth managers, tax advisors, and others working in this evolving field.

With expert contributions from Rebecca Roscoe, Professor Lesley King, Nina Ferris, Jac Armstrong and Anthony Whittaker, the programme explores the latest position on inheritance tax, emerging financial planning issues such as managing deceased clients' investment accounts, and key developments in contentious private client work. Delegates will benefit from a paired session offering both a contentious perspective and a direct analytical response, followed by a practical look at trustee accountability and the growing expectations around modern annual accounts. The conference also provides essential guidance on avoiding major pitfalls when making international inheritance payments, before concluding with an in-depth examination of the Residence Nil Rate Band, highlighting common technical traps and real-world scenarios where relief is unexpectedly lost.

BOOK NOW

In Partnership




Kindly Sponsored By







Employment

Exploring Detrimental Whistleblowing: An Expert Talk by Flora Page KC

In Person, 19th May, 12.30pm - 2.00pm

Join us for an in person lunch-and-learn session exploring detrimental whistleblowing with leading expert Flora Page KC.

Flora has a diverse criminal, regulatory and employment law practice, with particular expertise in corporate and financial misconduct. She formulated the winning argument in the historic Post Office appeals, *Hamilton and others* [2021] EWCA Crim 577, and went on to represent a prominent group of subpostmasters in the Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry. This session offers valuable insight into a highly topical and evolving area of practice.

BOOK NOW

Liverpool Law Society
Liverpool Law Society Presents
The New Foundation Series

Successful Careers Are Built Through In-Person Collaboration

 Thursday 4th June, 4.00pm to 6.00pm  In Person

Join us for the first session in our new foundation's series for young professionals in the first five years of their career across Professional Business Services, exploring how genuine career momentum is built through purposeful, in-person collaboration.

This interactive session will explore why showing up, connecting face to face, and building genuine relationships both within your organisation and across the wider professional community can fast-track your growth and open doors you didn't even know were there. You'll also benefit from dedicated networking opportunities designed to help you meet new people, share experiences, and expand your professional circle in a relaxed and welcoming environment.

This session is part of an exciting new series focused on core areas of professional development, supporting you to build the confidence, capability, and connections essential for long-term career progression.

WHY REGISTER?

-  Develop core skills to build career momentum
-  Expand your network and confidence for long-term growth
-  Gain practical insights to strengthen your professional foundations

[BOOK NOW](#)

Liverpool Law Society

Civil Litigation

Civil Litigation Update 2026

with Andrew McLoughlin

Online, 10th June, 9:30am - 12:30pm

Join us for a comprehensive update on the fast-moving landscape of procedure and practice following the introduction of FRC.

This course will explore key developments including conducting or assisting in litigation post-Mazur and the procedural and costs challenges arising from it; relief from sanctions and whether the position has improved a decade on; the latest Part 36 developments; case law and procedural changes from the last 12 months; and an essential update on costs, budgeting, and assessments.

[BOOK NOW](#)

Liverpool Law Society

Civil Litigation

Personal Injury Update 2026

with Andrew McLoughlin

Online, 10th June, 1:30pm - 4:30pm

As a busy Personal Injury Practitioner, it is essential to be up to speed on the latest changes in Personal Injury Law. Nothing ever stays the same!

Expert Personal Injury and Litigation trainer, Andrew McLoughlin, is delivering a session that will look at practical solutions for practitioners, do the best for your client, and provide you with an innovative approach to Personal Injury Litigation.

Join us for a session providing every practitioner with updated knowledge in the field of personal injury law and practice. Topics covered include:

- Fundamental Dishonesty – review of the last 12 months' cases
- Road Traffic Accident claims – a case review
- Part 36 – its impact on personal injury in the last 12 months
- Occupiers Liability – an update
- Employers Liability – some recent cases

[BOOK NOW](#)

Liverpool Law Society

Employment

Third Party Harassment: Rights, Liabilities and Future Developments

With Rebecca Jones

In Person, 23rd June, 12.30pm - 2.00pm

Join us in person for a focused lunch-and-learn session on Third Party Harassment: Rights, Liabilities and Future Developments, led by Rebecca Jones of 23 Essex Street.

This seminar will provide a clear and comprehensive overview of third-party harassment in the workplace, drawing on key legislation, recent case law and upcoming changes under the Employment Rights Act 2025. It's an ideal opportunity to deepen your understanding of employer obligations, evolving legal standards and practical steps for managing risk.

[BOOK NOW](#)

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.

Aaron & Partners LLP
4,721 followers
4d · Edited · 🌐

This morning, our Employment Law Roadshow 2026 continued in Chester at the DoubleTree by Hilton. ...more

62 2 comments · 6 reposts

Like Comment Repost Send

Dutton Gregory Solicitors
4,151 followers
4d · Edited · 🌐

📍 Liverpool Property Breakfast Event at Albert's Schloss

Yesterday, we hosted our fantastic annual event where we talked about all ...more

26 2 comments · 6 reposts

Like Comment Repost Send

Acuity Law
6,720 followers
5d · Edited · 🌐

Last week, Senior Partner **Christopher Agius** was delighted to announce the re-launch of Acuity Law's Banking & Finance Team while hosting The Trading Room Showdown – Trading for Good, bringing together clients from across the ...more

29 2 comments · 4 reposts

Like Comment Repost Send

Bell Lamb & Joynton Solicitors
2,652 followers
3d · 🌐

Surviving, Thriving and Collaborating. 🌱

For week 3 of National Conveyancing Month, our Conveyancing ...more

20 1 repost

Like Comment Repost Send

Brown Turner Ross
1,094 followers
2d · 🌐

📍 Supporting Comic Relief

Today, our team has been raising money in support of Comic Relief ahead ...more

12 2 comments · 6 reposts

Like Comment Repost Send

Gregory Abrams Davidson Solicitors
833 followers
2w · Edited · 🌐

Last week we celebrated the people who make it all happen - **#employeeappreciationday**

To our incredible team — your hard work, dedication and positivity never ...more

18 1 comment · 2 reposts

Like Comment Repost Send

DTM Legal LLP
2,352 followers
3d · 🌐

Today's **FinTech North** Liverpool 2026 event has been a great opportunity to share insights with the regions FinTech community. With **Kate Roberts'** panel on The Future of Risk just drawing to a close we are looking forward to continuing ...more

15 2 comments · 6 reposts

Like Comment Repost Send

CEL Solicitors
5,872 followers
1w · Edited · 🌐

On Friday 6th March, we proudly hosted our annual International Women's Day breakfast, bringing together the incredible women across our firm. ...more

25 4 reposts

Like Comment Repost Send

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



Able
Community Care
Est.1980



Able Community Care is celebrating 45 years of providing nationwide, Live-in Care Support

Live-in care is more than just a care service - it's a lifeline that allows individuals to:

- Remain in their familiar and cherished home environment.
- Receive personalized support tailored to their unique needs.
- Maintain a sense of independence and control over their daily life.

For further information visit our website at: www.ablecommunitycare.com where you can find an application form (SUAF). To request an information brochure call **01603 764567** or email to: info@ablecommunitycare.com



Able Community Care based in Norfolk but available everywhere. NR14 8TZ



LawCare

**How are you,
really?**

**Every day, we hear from
people across the legal
sector. We're here to listen.**

Call our helpline: 0800 279 6888

support@lawcare.org.uk

lawcare.org.uk