

November 2024

Liverpool Law

Liverpool  Law Society

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

Raising funds for the Access to Justice Foundation with the 2024 Legal Walk

Report on p.26





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November 2024

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Front cover photo: **Ray Farley**

- December 2024 edition: Tues, 26.11.24
- January 2025 edition: Fri, 13.12.24
- February 2025 edition: Thu, 23.01.25
- March 2025 edition: Fri, 21.02.25
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- October 2025 edition: Tue, 23.09.25
- November 2025 edition: Tue, 21.10.25
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Word Count Guidelines: Notes for Contributors

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

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

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

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

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

- * Spanning a single column
- ** Spanning two columns
- *** Spanning three columns



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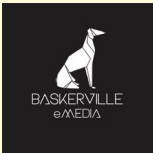
Liverpool Law Society Magazine is produced by and for Liverpool Law Society Members. This is our opportunity to share our news, events and celebrations with our friends in the legal community.

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

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

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Editorial Committee Dates 2024

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

- Tue, 19 Nov 24*
- Wed, 15 Jan 25*
- Mon, 17 Feb 25*
- Tue, 18 Mar 25*
- Mon, 14 Apr 25*
- Tue, 20 May 25*
- Tue, 17 Jun 25*
- Tue, 15 Jul 25*
- Tue, 19 Aug 25*
- Tue, 16 Sep 25*
- Wed, 15 Oct 25*
- Tue, 18 Nov 25*

Welcome to the November edition of Liverpool Law



Our front cover this month is the Legal Walk and you will see that there was a record turnout this year which also exceeded the goal for funds to be raised. Well done to all involved on what looks like another great event. We have included a link to all the photographs of the day on [page 26](#), so have a look through and see if you can spot yourself or any of your colleagues.

We often feature articles from current and former colleagues of mine in the magazine and those of friends made through Liverpool Law Society etc and I always feel a sense of pride. This month, however, is especially so with the inclusion of my old school friend **Paul Maddock's** article on [page 17](#). Paul has done fantastic things in his career so far and it is lovely to see that he is helping students who were just like us in our local comprehensive school, who certainly didn't have any legal contacts to help get a foot in the door. It is imperative that we help future generations in their careers, regardless of their backgrounds, so that we have a fully representative legal community.

I hope to see as many of our legal community as possible at our Annual Dinner and Awards which is now sold out. It is always such a great event and best of luck to everyone who is shortlisted.

2025 is nearly here and your editorial team have been preparing ahead. You will see we have a list of our 2025 meetings and deadlines in this edition, please make a note now for your future submissions. Whilst we are an online magazine there is a lot of work that goes on in the background and it is imperative that we keep to the deadlines to keep things running smoothly. As always if you have any suggestions of what you would like to be included in the magazine or any queries please reach out.

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 October's General Committee meeting. There were 19 individuals from the following organisations:

- Barnado's
- CEL Solicitors
- Costs Lawyer UK
- DWF
- Fletchers Group
- Gregory Abrams Davidson Solicitors
- Haworth & Gallagher
- Irvings
- Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- Paul Crowley & Co
- Weightmans

Liverpool Law Society's membership now exceeds 2,430 individuals from 230 law firms, barristers' chambers, and other organisations with legal professionals in the Liverpool City Region and beyond.

From the President

The latest from the President, Gaynor Williams

We are now firmly into the autumn season, and xmas is beckoning, Jeremy Myers, Past President, did tell me how quickly this year would pass, and I cannot quite believe that we are nearly into December. I will pass over the honour of Presidency to James Mannouch along with the beautiful jewel that I have loved wearing and showing off. I have truly enjoyed every minute of my Presidency, but I am not quite finished.

A special thank you to all the walkers, two legged and four legged, who did the 5k Liverpool Legal Walk on 1 October 2024 to raise funds for the Access to Justice Foundation. There was a fantastic turnout as has been the case the last few years, and donations are still coming in. Thank you to **Steve Cornforth**, **Julie O'Hare** and the LLS team for organising the event, it is always a great success. I was not able to join the walkers because I was honoured to attend the [Opening of the Legal Year](#) in Westminster Abbey, I have included an article about the celebrations I attended in the evening and the procession the following day in this edition. I did have to pinch myself when **Lady Hale** appeared next to me as we walked into the Abbey, and I managed to chat with her before she was lost to other admirers.

As we regularly do, the Directors of LLS and I met with Local Authority representatives on 3 October 2024, to discuss local issues, update the councillors and representatives with legislation and housing issues, and to discuss any local issues. **Lauren Cannon**, the Parliamentary Liaison Officer asked that Special Educational Needs ('SEN'), be put onto the agenda and the University of Liverpool Law Clinic kindly provided a power point to show the difficulties encountered by parents of SEN children. This is an important issue that is affecting parents throughout the UK. If children are not receiving the appropriate support, they risk being excluded from school, and this opens up issues of gang crime and a further burden on our public services. We have been told that there is limited funding available however it is important that we continue to be the voice of our members and try and work with local authorities and MP's to try and make a change.

On 10 October 2024 we were honoured to have **Sir Stephen Cobb** visit our city to speak at the Conkerton Memorial lecture held in the beautiful Port of Liverpool building. His speech "*Justice must be seen to be done. One hundred years since Rex v Sussex Justices (1924).*" was interesting and informative and there were quite a few questions asked by the audience afterwards. The evening ended with a relaxed dinner at the Racquet Club, joined by Officers, Judges and representatives from the universities. Thank you, **David Tournafond**, Chair of the Charities and Education subcommittee, for organising the event, and to LLS staff for their hard work making the evening a success.



The following day the Directors of LLS and I met with MPs. It was a busy agenda with various topics discussed, such as SEN, homelessness, housing and legal aid rates.

On 15 October 2024 I chaired the meeting for the Bicentenary working party. We have lots of creative and inventive ideas, and it is a good job we have lots of time to prepare for the celebrations, because a lot of work will be involved bringing everything together. Thank you to the past presidents and officers for being so supportive and helpful with the plans.

As I write this column, I am preparing my speech for the Annual Dinner and Legal Awards on 14 November 2024 at Rum Warehouse, Titanic Hotel, Liverpool. **Lady Hale** is our speaker, and I look forward to seeing everyone. I especially enjoy seeing the black ties and all the beautiful colourful dresses, we are known for our sense of style in Liverpool, and this event not only showcases our legal talent but our exceptional dress sense.

Our annual [AGM](#) is scheduled for 28 November 2024 at the Racquet Club, Liverpool city centre. Please come along if you can.

Gaynor Williams
President

president@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk

LLS Meetings & events – Nov/Dec 2024

Start Time	Meeting/Event
12/11/2024 12:30	General Committee
14/11/2024 18:00	2024 Annual Dinner featuring the Legal Awards
19/11/2024 13:00	Editorial Sub-Committee
20/11/2024 13:00	Civil Litigation Sub-Committee
21/11/2024 13:30	Future Planning Sub-Committee
21/11/2024 16:00	Criminal Practice Sub-Committee
21/11/2024 16:00	Family Business Sub-Committee
21/11/2024 17:30	Sub-Committee Social
26/11/2024 09:00	Liverpool Law deadline day
26/11/2024 12:30	Finance & Policy Sub-Committee
27/11/2024 09:15	Property Development: Practical Problems
27/11/2024 13:00	EDI Sub-Committee
28/11/2024 13:00	Annual General Meeting
03/12/2024 13:00	Employment Law Sub-Committee
05/12/2024 13:00	In-House Lawyers Sub-Committee
10/12/2024 12:30	General Committee
12/12/2024 13:00	Non-Contentious 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; Editorial; Family Business; In-House Lawyers; Non-Contentious Business and Regulatory committees, which are open to members of Liverpool Law Society. To enquire about your membership status and/or being co-opted onto one of the above committees, please email committees@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk

Consultation Papers

Papers referred to committees:

The following sub-committee of Liverpool Law Society is considering responding to 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
Criminal Practice	Law Commission consultation on contempt of court	08.11.24
Criminal Practice	Miscellaneous amendments to sentencing guidelines 2024	27.11.24
Criminal Practice	https://consult.justice.gov.uk/sentencing-council/ancillary-orders-consultation/	04.12.24



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Leaders in Law: Kevin Johnson



**Kevin Johnson, Managing Partner,
Leigh Day Liverpool office**

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

I've been based in and managing our Liverpool office since December 2016 but in the last 12 months or so, we've seen a period of expansion, with two new partners joining us; Joanne Candlish who is an asbestos lawyer like myself and Leanne Devine who works in our human rights department, specialising in inquests against state bodies.

In September, we secured a Legal Aid franchise for the Liverpool office in relation to inquests involving the State and claims against public authorities. Together with Jo and Leanne, I'm involved in developing our local strategy and managing our continuing growth, whilst also balancing my day job of acting for asbestos disease sufferers.

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

After having spent periods of my career working in Manchester, I love being back home and working in Liverpool on a daily basis. The opportunity to develop a Liverpool office that will hopefully go on to provide all of the vital social justice related legal services that Leigh Day

provides from London and Manchester, is a real privilege. Being in a small office with lovely colleagues is great in terms of camaraderie, but as a smaller office, we don't always have the same infrastructure on site that our bigger sites possess, which calls for some multi-tasking and diverse skills.

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

Covid was the catalyst for rapid changes to our work practices, particularly in IT; changes that were planned to be phased in over several years happened overnight. I've heard our heads of business services say that the pandemic accelerated plans by perhaps 5 years in terms of IT infrastructure, home working policies, going paper free, etc.

Post-Covid we have a 3:2 policy. We're an office based business and encourage staff to come into the office whilst at the same time, recognising the advantages that working from home can offer in terms of commute time, work life balance, productivity, etc. I hope that we provide the right balance.

Office based working is important to a firm like ours in terms of understanding our culture and ethos, training, supervision, sharing ideas, etc. Simply being in an office and in proximity to colleagues and seeing how they work is important in terms of learning by osmosis.

We try to encourage colleagues to attend the office by offering various workplace benefits including a policy of providing free breakfast and lunch to all staff in the firm, either through on-site catering or subsidised food from local providers (in our case a local independent café). This has proven very popular.

4. What do you see as your biggest challenges?

The biggest challenge for a social justice firm like ours in recent years has been successive governments undermining legal rights and the erosion of access to justice. There are so many low points to choose from in the last 14 years in terms of chronic underfunding of Legal Aid and the courts, changes to civil litigation funding, etc but I think a particular low point has been the attacks by successive governments on human rights "lefty lawyers". The apparent contempt for the rule of law and the nature of some of the personalised attacks on colleagues has been abhorrent. I would like to hope that we're now in a more rational and mature place in terms of any discussion about the position and role of lawyers in society.

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

Undoubtedly the many landmark cases that my firm has been involved in and the amazing lawyers who have brought them. The firm seeks to represent members of the public and ensure that they are provided with outstanding legal representation that is at least as good (if not better) than the big businesses, insurers and governments that we act against. I am incredibly proud of our legacy of landmark cases that push the legal boundaries such as international environmental group claims for thousands of overseas clients affected by pollution caused by British companies or the Kenyan Ma Mau claims, through to more recent cases on behalf of gig economy workers, equal pay claims such as the recent Next decision, the contaminated blood inquiry, etc. The list is too long.

6. What are the immediate short-term goals?

In the short term, we want to offer an increased range of legal services

in addition to the areas of work that we already offer in Liverpool. The new Legal Aid franchise gives us a platform to do that. The hope is that local people who have complex legal needs in various areas can be supported from our office in Liverpool. This will involve some expansion and probable office relocation. We also want to attract and develop local lawyers and are working closely with local law centres and universities. We now have our first Liverpool based trainee solicitor.

We have a number of important cases in the pipeline, not least the Stade de France claims for Liverpool FC fans injured and affected at the 2022 Champions League Final. We have brought together specialist lawyers from our international travel department and our product liability teams to ensure that our clients get the best representation possible; the teams

have combined experience and skills in relation to complex jurisdictional issues and the challenges of handling large scale group litigation.

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

I hope that Leigh Day will be doing the same type of work that we always have done, acting for the Davids against the Goliaths of this world. I also hope that we will continue to be fearless and innovative in our approach; holding the rich and powerful to account, with an eye on the big picture not just the commerciality of running a law firm, taking on the difficult and challenging cases and trying to balance the scales. I particularly hope that we continue to attract the best lawyers who want to work for us because they believe in the work and what we do; they are the lifeblood of the firm.

8. What legacy, as Managing Partner at the Liverpool office, would you like to leave the firm?

As I've mentioned, I hope that Leigh Day in Liverpool will be able to provide the same legal services to the local community that our offices elsewhere already provide. That way, when people have complex legal problems, they won't have to consider instructing lawyers from other regions and won't have to travel elsewhere, as the best representation is on their doorstep.

I also hope that our Liverpool office will be seen as a vibrant, diverse and supportive place to work where colleagues will feel nurtured and valued. I hope that aspiring lawyers will feel that we're a great place to come to train as a lawyer doing socially important work for the injured, wronged and vulnerable.

Your local Law Society: AGM

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

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

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

We hope you can find the time to join us for this important annual meeting, and take the opportunity to chat and mingle.

Please confirm your attendance to committees@liverpoollawsociety.org.uk if you have not already replied to the AGM invite email.

Gaynor Williams
President

Jackson Lees Strengthens Family Team



Sarah McCarthy

Law firm Jackson Lees has strengthened its family team with the appointment of Sarah McCarthy as a chartered legal executive.

Sarah, who has joined the Liverpool and Wirral practice from Hill Dickinson, has over 20 years' experience working in family law. In 2021 she was crowned family law chartered legal executive of the year at the Family Law Awards.

She has been a member of Liverpool Law Society's family law sub-committee since 2011, assisting director **Jo Downey** in organising the organisation's private child conference and family finance conference.

Jackson Lees is part of the Jackson Lees

Group, which also includes Broudie Jackson Canter and Farrington Law.

The group provides advice on a range of private and public family law matters, including divorce proceedings, financial remedy issues, pre and postnuptial agreements and child arrangements.

Sarah is among a spate of recent recruits at Jackson Lees as it focuses on expansion. Her appointment follows the recent arrival of four new members in the court of protection team, including **Oliver Banks** and **Claire Martini** as its head and deputy head respectively.

Haley Farrell, deputy managing director and head of family law at Jackson Lees

Group, said *"With her vast experience in family law and her passion for helping others and making a positive difference, Sarah is a tremendous addition to our expanding team."*

"We are delighted she has joined us as we develop the practice with our focus on growth and providing exceptional client care across Merseyside and the north west."

Sarah said: *"I like that I act as a confidant for clients within my work, as it allows me to show the empathy they deserve when dealing with sensitive matters."*

"I am excited to put this into practice and lend my support to clients and the family team at Jackson Lees."

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Unit Chambers Welcomes Three New Barristers, Strengthening Its Family Law Expertise



Dr. Alex Khan



Misha Ryan



Jennifer Grehan

Unit Chambers, the leading family law barristers chambers in both Liverpool and Manchester, is delighted to announce the arrival of three highly skilled barristers to its growing team: Dr. Alex Khan, Misha Ryan, and Jennifer Grehan. Each brings a wealth of experience and expertise, significantly expanding Unit Chambers' offering in family law, child protection, and Court of Protection matters, both domestically and internationally.

Dr. Alex Khan

With nearly 25 years of experience in family law, Dr. Alex Khan is a highly respected barrister, specialising in complex financial applications arising from divorce. A native of Manchester, Alex's deep understanding of the local community, combined with his extensive experience in multicultural and religious issues, enables him to provide tailored support to clients navigating sensitive family law matters. His practice includes handling disputes over pensions, property, and company law, as well as cases with international assets and cross-border complexities.

Alex's expertise extends to mediation,

arbitration, private Financial Dispute Resolutions (FDRs), and Early Neutral Evaluations (ENEs), ensuring that clients have access to a broad range of resolution options. His legal acumen in family and Chancery disputes, including trusts of land applications (TOLATA) and probate issues, further enhances Unit Chambers' service offering.

In addition to his practice, Alex has international legal experience, having worked in Dubai, and maintains a global network to assist with cross-jurisdictional cases. He is also the lead tutor for the LPC Family Unit at Manchester Law School, underscoring his commitment to mentoring the next generation of legal professionals.

Misha Ryan

Specialising in child protection, Misha Ryan brings substantial experience representing local authorities across the North West as an In-House Advocate, most recently at Manchester City Council. Her expertise includes Deprivation of Liberty applications, international care order applications, and complex finding-of-fact hearings. Misha is known for her fearless approach

and has gained a strong reputation with clients and opponents alike.

Misha's practice at Unit Chambers will continue to focus on child protection and Court of Protection work, including tribunal cases. While her work will primarily be remote, she remains open to attending in-person hearings when necessary, offering flexibility to her clients.

Her addition to the team further strengthens Unit Chambers' already strong offering in public law matters, providing comprehensive representation for both local authorities and private clients in highly sensitive child protection cases.

Jennifer Grehan

Jennifer Grehan brings a diverse range of expertise in Children's Law, Court of Protection, and International Family Law. She has appeared regularly in the High Court and family courts throughout London, Liverpool, Manchester, and the North West, representing clients in complex matters involving non-accidental injuries, parental alienation, and international child abduction. Jennifer's extensive experience in both Hague Convention and non-Hague Convention jurisdictions, coupled with her work in

neglect, sexual abuse, and Deprivation of Liberty cases, positions her as a formidable advocate for vulnerable clients, including those with learning difficulties. Her expertise also includes acting in Public and Private Law cases, representing local authorities, vulnerable parents, and guardians.

In the Court of Protection, Jennifer is frequently engaged in personal welfare disputes and best interest decisions, representing families, local authorities, and the Official Solicitor in complex and sensitive matters.

A Growing Commitment to Excellence
The addition of these three exceptional barristers reflects Unit Chambers' ongoing commitment to delivering expert legal services in family law and associated areas. By welcoming Dr. Alex Khan, Misha Ryan, and Jennifer Grehan,

Unit Chambers significantly enhances its ability to offer comprehensive, high-quality legal representation across a wide spectrum of family law matters, from financial disputes to child protection and Court of Protection cases.

Lisa Edmunds, Head of Chambers and CEO, Unit Chambers commented:

"We are thrilled to welcome Dr. Alex Khan, Misha Ryan, and Jennifer Grehan to Unit Chambers. Their wealth of expertise, dedication, and passion for family law will undoubtedly strengthen our team and enhance the range of services we provide to our clients. Each of them brings a unique set of skills and experiences—from complex financial disputes and international family law matters to child protection and Court of Protection cases—allowing us to offer even more comprehensive and tailored

legal support. Their addition aligns perfectly with our vision of providing exceptional advocacy and legal solutions across all areas of family law, and we look forward to the positive impact they will have on our chambers and clients."



For more information about Unit Chambers or to inquire about our legal services, please visit our website: www.unit.law

DWF named Responsible Business leader by Lamp House Strategy

DWF, the global provider of integrated legal and business services, has been recognised as the leading law firm for Responsible Business by Lamp House Strategy, a consultancy providing insights on the legal sector.

Lamp House has published its second annual global review of law firms' responsible business activity. The report tracks performance in three categories: Governance, People and Planet. DWF was named as the leading firm for both Governance and People, and as one the top five firms for Planet. The report highlighted DWF's transparency, accountability, and strong commitment to measurable actions and reporting.

For the second consecutive year, DWF was named the leading firm in the Governance category, with the report citing impressive data collection and public reporting on metrics including employee engagement scores, employee attrition, and the uptake of parental leave policies.

DWF also took the top spot in the People category this year, with notable initiatives including its Women and LGBTQ+ Employee Networks, which helped shape a new menopause support policy, and the launch of its Ethnic Minority Access Programme.

Commenting on the recognition, **Sir Nigel Knowles**, CEO of DWF, said: *"We are proud to be recognised by Lamp House Strategy as the overall leader for responsible business. We take our commitments to ESG & Sustainability very seriously, first and foremost because it is the right thing to do, but also because there is a clear business imperative to get this right. It is an expectation from our colleagues, from our clients and from the communities in which we operate.*

"While we are pleased with the progress we have made, we also recognise the amount of work still to be done and the need to go further. Later this financial year, we will be publishing our net zero action plan which will include details of some excellent

initiatives to help us achieve our aims."

Kirsty Rogers, Chief Sustainability Officer at DWF, added: *"Since launching our ESG strategy, we have maintained our focus on advancing the UN Sustainable Development Goals, improving outcomes for our clients, fostering a more diverse and inclusive workplace, making meaningful community investment and reducing our scope 1 and 2 emissions on our journey to Net Zero. We also remain focused on better understanding our scope 3 emissions and how we can most effectively reduce that impact.*

"Through collaboration with external partners, such as the UNGC Working Groups, Net Zero Lawyers Alliance, Legal Sustainability Alliance and the Legal Charter 1.5, we have strengthened our credentials and impact. Our ability to maintain a profitable, sustainable and values led business is driven by the realisation that it's the future, not the past, that will define us."

Leigh Day expands its human rights legal department to Liverpool



Leanne Devine, Kevin Johnson, Joanne Candlish

Law firm Leigh Day has expanded its northern human rights operation by offering legal aid funded work relating to inquests involving the state and claims against public authorities at its Liverpool office.

The development is part of Leigh Day's aim to expand its human rights work across the UK to help more people gain access to justice.

In Liverpool, and across the region, it will especially enable the firm to help bereaved families find legal aid funded legal representation at inquests into the deaths of loved ones.

The human rights team in Liverpool will be headed by Leigh Day partner [Leanne Devine](#) who is well known in the region for her work as a senior solicitor in the team representing bereaved families in the Hillsborough Inquests.

Leanne, who is from Liverpool, joined Leigh Day in 2023. Leanne has many years' experience representing bereaved families in Article 2 inquests, and connected claims against public authorities. Her cases have a particular emphasis on mental health related deaths, people who have died in local authority care, in prison and cases involving the police. Leanne's experience involves cases concerning restraint whilst in police and prison custody. She has significant experience in acting for families where their loved one has been subject to domestic abuse resulting in death or where the death has resulted from homicide

involving state failures. Leanne is a member of INQUEST Lawyers Group and a panel member of Centre for Women's Justice.

A legal aid contract for Leigh Day's Liverpool office means Leanne and her team will be able to help more families who might otherwise not be able to find legal representation for inquests into deaths in which the role of public services is a cause for concern.

The Leigh Day partnership was one of the first law firms in the UK to launch a human rights department, at its London base, after the Human Rights Act 1998 was passed.

The firm expanded the human rights department with a launch in Manchester in autumn 2023. There, Leigh Day partners [Ryan Bradshaw](#) and [Stephanie Hill](#) have helped clients with claims relating to discrimination, welfare rights and migrants' rights, as well as many others in judicial reviews and claims for breaches of human rights.

The Human Rights Act 1998, which enshrined the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) in UK law, and the Equality Act 2010 have been used by thousands of people in the UK to defend their rights with the help of legal aid funded lawyers. The Human Rights Act protects the right to life as well as many freedoms, including from slavery, forced labour and degrading treatment. The Equality Act protects against discrimination for race, disability, sex, religion, age, and sexual orientation.

The expansion to Liverpool means people there will have access to legal aid funded lawyers to help defend their rights under the Human Rights Act and the Equality Act. This is particularly important given the number of firms providing legal aid funded advice has fallen significantly in [recent years](#) and is due to fall even further.

At the Liverpool office, at present Leanne works alongside Leigh Day partners [Kevin](#)

[Johnson](#) and [Joanne Candlish](#) whose work is focused on asbestos related claims.

At its Manchester offices in Harpurhey, as well as human rights work, more than 300 legal staff work on employment, personal injury and clinical negligence cases.

Leigh Day partner [Leanne Devine](#) said: *"I am delighted that the Legal Aid Agency has awarded the contract to our Liverpool office which will enable us to offer our support to people across the region. When grieving families reach out for help it is often at the worst time of their lives. The families I work with have many unanswered questions. The investigations surrounding the death are not always straightforward and need to be expanded to ensure a full and fearless investigation is carried out."*

"I am passionate about ensuring families in Liverpool and the wider region are able to access the specialist legal advice they need. With our Liverpool office being based in the city centre, our clients can easily reach us for face to face meetings when preferred."

Leigh Day partner [Gene Matthews](#), who jointly heads the firmwide human rights team, said:

"The firm is thrilled to be expanding its human rights team to Liverpool. The work undertaken by Leanne, and the other lawyers in the department, will help to ensure that an even greater number of people gain access to justice. We are pleased to be joining the first-rate professionals who are already making a real difference in the region and hope our contribution will further support these critically important areas of law."

Leigh Day partner [Kevin Johnson](#) said: *"The legal aid contract is a massive boost to Leigh Day's work in Liverpool. Over many years we have been able to help victims of asbestos disease and their loved ones. Now, thanks to Leanne's expertise and legal aid funding for clients whose cases match the criteria, we will be able to expand our work to help people often experiencing the worst tragedies."*

Brown Turner Ross Solicitors expands with the opening of Formby office



Liverpool and Southport based law firm Brown Turner Ross have opened a new office in Formby, situated on Elbow Lane, the building previously occupied by Formby Law.

This expansion will see the Brown Turner Ross team grow by 25% from 40 to 50 employees across all departments with plans for additional recruitment. Further investment will also be made in technology to update and streamline client systems and services.

Brown Turner Ross specialise in a wide range of legal services including commercial and residential property, corporate, civil litigation, divorce, wills, trusts, probate, employment law and housing disrepair.

The company also have offices on Lord

Street, Southport and The Cotton Exchange Building in Liverpool.

Managing Director, **Sam Bushell** said *“This is an exciting opportunity for Brown Turner Ross to offer a personal and comprehensive service to the community of Formby and surrounding areas. Formby is a thriving town which is embracing development and has a diverse population of over 24,000 inhabitants”.*

Sam continued *“We look forward to offering enhanced legal services and providing clients with access to advice and justice, with all the benefits that a local community practice brings. This new office also indicates Brown Turner Ross’s commitment to growth”.*

Founded in Southport in 1884, Brown Turner Ross has become one of the



Sam Bushell

leading law firms in the northwest with an extensive local, national and international client base.

Liverpool law firm hits £100 million recovered for fraud victims



Jessica Hampson

CEL Solicitors has recently hit a landmark £100 million pounds recovered for victims of scams. The family-run firm has helped more than 6,000 clients who have been duped by criminals in a range of fraudulent activities.

A Liverpool law firm is celebrating after reaching the landmark of recovering £100 million for victims of scams.

According to UK Finance, £1.17 billion was lost to fraud and scams last year, making it the most common crime in the country. Someone in the UK is scammed every 10 seconds.

But for the last four years, CEL Solicitors has made it its mission to help the victims of increasingly sophisticated schemes such as romance fraud and investment scams.

CEO **Jessica Hampson** said: *“We’re extremely proud of the work we do to support people who have been targeted. We’ve been here for them when they have had nowhere else to turn.*

“There’s still a stigma attached to scams where victims feel ashamed about losing money in this way.

“Some can’t bring themselves to tell their family about it and others believe their bank not offering support is the end of the line.

“But we listen to them and we fight for them when we feel financial institutions should have done more to protect their customers.”

CEL Solicitors is a family-run firm that employs more than 100 people at its headquarters in Chapel Street, Liverpool city centre.

Mrs Hamspon added: *“Each person we speak to has a different situation which led to them being scammed, but one thing we always reassure them is that it’s not their fault.*

“Criminals are always coming up with new tactics to con people out of their money and the scams are becoming increasingly sophisticated.

“Banks also hold responsibility for having checks in place to ensure money isn’t being sent to scam accounts.”

New rules state that banks must refund customers that have been defrauded but this can be rejected if the bank decides the claimant was negligent.

Refunds should be returned within five working days after being notified, or up to 35 days if more time is needed. The cost of the

refund will be split between the payment providers that sent and received the funds.

As well as bringing in this new rule, the Payment Systems Regulator (PRS) has slashed the amount banks have to refund from £415,000 to £85,000.

Mrs Hamspon said: *“This new regulation provides stronger protection for customers, holding banks accountable and pushing them to act swiftly when scams occur.*

“But the changes to the amount banks refund is surprising, especially since the PRS deemed £85,000 ‘too low’ last year.

“It would be interesting to know how banks will measure if a customer’s actions were negligent and on what grounds they will refuse claims.”



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SILVER AWARD 2022

DWF supports early careers with University of Liverpool partnership

DWF, the global provider of integrated legal and business services, has partnered with the University of Liverpool's School of Law and Social Justice to launch a new 'Law with a Year in Industry' programme.

The inaugural 'Law with a Year in Industry' programme commenced in September. The programme aims to provide students with the invaluable opportunity of spending the third year of their University course working with leading law firms, gaining real-world legal experience before returning to complete their final year of studies. Students from under-represented backgrounds, or those who believe they would face barriers when entering the world of work were strongly encouraged to apply.

As one of six firms involved, DWF has welcomed six paid placement students to work across various legal teams, giving them hands-on exposure to a range of legal practices.

In a separate development, the global legal business has also welcomed 17 additional apprentices in Liverpool through its insurance solicitor apprenticeship pathway. The solicitor apprenticeship places aspiring solicitors on a 6 year apprenticeship programme, encompassing an LLB (Hons) in Law and Legal Practice and the SQE. In August 2024, DWF welcomed a record high 32 solicitors apprentices' across the UK and proudly announced **Claudia Webb** as the business' fourth solicitor to qualify through this apprenticeship route.

Paul Maddock, director at DWF, said: "We are incredibly proud to support the University of Liverpool's 'Law with a Year in Industry' programme. This initiative not only opens doors for students but also ensures they gain meaningful, hands-on experience in a



Paul Maddock

real-world setting. By providing them with opportunities to rotate through various legal teams, we are helping to shape the next generation of legal talent.

"I would also like to welcome our 17 new apprentices through our insurance solicitor apprenticeship pathway in Liverpool. These initiatives demonstrate DWF's ongoing commitment to investing in talent and creating long-term career opportunities for future legal professionals."



Julie Simms

Julie Simms, managing partner of DWF in Liverpool, added: "We are

absolutely thrilled to support both the University of Liverpool's Year in Industry programme and the apprentice pathway here in Liverpool. It is fantastic to have the opportunity to support each person on their journey to becoming a lawyer. DWF are passionate about investing in initiatives such as this and we welcome the opportunity to work closely with the University."



Valsamis Mitsilegas

Prof Valsamis Mitsilegas, Dean of the School of Law and Social Justice at the University of Liverpool, said: "We are delighted to collaborate with DWF and other leading law firms on the 'Law with a Year in Industry' programme. This initiative is transformative for our students, offering them invaluable practical experience within high-calibre legal environments. By working alongside seasoned professionals, they will not only enhance their legal expertise but also gain vital insights into the real-world challenges and opportunities that define today's legal landscape. At the School of Law and Social Justice, we are committed to providing opportunities that broaden our students' horizons, and this partnership is a vital step towards preparing them for future success."

Leigh Day and INQUEST call for mechanism to properly respond to and prevent deaths at Labour Party Conference



Law firm [Leigh Day](#) and INQUEST hosted an event at the Labour Party Conference in September, on the need to follow up on life-saving recommendations and prevent future deaths.

Bereaved families and expert human rights lawyers renewed calls for the government to establish a [National Oversight Mechanism](#). This would be a new, independent public body responsible for collating, analysing and following up on recommendations arising from investigations into state-related deaths. The need for real transparency and accountability is needed now more than ever. Earlier this month, the Grenfell Tower Inquiry published its final report on the avoidable deaths of 72 people in the 2017 fire. The inquiry recommended the government introduce a new legal mechanism to publish recommendations and their responses to enable scrutiny of action from Parliament.

The event heard from [INQUEST's](#)

Director [Deborah Coles](#), co-founder of Leigh Day [Martyn Day](#), Chair of Grenfell United [Natasha Elcock](#), bereaved family member and father of [Matthew Caseby](#), [Richard Caseby](#), and [Emma Jones](#), a partner in the human rights team at



Leigh Day who led a team of lawyers on the Infected Blood Inquiry. [Joe Powell](#) MP for Kensington and Bayswater and [Attorney General Richard Hermer](#) KC also spoke.

The event took place Sunday 22 September.

Leigh Day partner [Leanne Devine](#) recently expanded the firm's [human rights](#) work to Liverpool, offering legal aid funded work relating to inquests involving the state and claims against public authorities.

Leanne Devine said:

"The families we represent are often frustrated by the lack of follow-up on life-saving recommendations from inquiries into state-related deaths. It is a critical issue of justice and accountability.

"Without a robust, independent mechanism to ensure that lessons are acted upon, there are repeated avoidable tragedies. We see this regularly through the cases that we deal with.



“A National Oversight Mechanism is essential to protect lives, uphold human rights, and ensure that bereaved families are heard and that meaningful change follows these devastating losses.”

Emma Jones, human rights partner at

Leigh Day, said:

“As we have seen through countless inquests and public inquiries, from Grenfell to the Contaminated Blood Inquiry, recommendations alone are not enough. There must be a system in place to ensure that these

findings lead to real, tangible change.

“A National Oversight Mechanism would provide the essential accountability needed to prevent future deaths and offer justice for bereaved families who deserve more than just promises of reform.”



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MJLD Autumn Social



The Merseyside Junior Lawyers Division hosted its first event of the year on Wednesday 16th October 2024, an Autumn social held at L'Aperitivo on Bold Street. We are grateful to G2 Legal who sponsored the event and helped make it a huge success. Our Autumn Link-Up was a sold-out event with 75 of Merseyside's junior lawyers in attendance for a night of light-bites and drinks. The first event of the year was a great opportunity for junior lawyers to network, catch up and meet new members.

The event was attended by G2 Legal representatives **Carl Ryan** and **George Beard**. Carl and George talked all things recruitment and careers with our members throughout the night, and even hosted a raffle for one junior lawyer to win a bottle of champagne!

The MJLD would like to thank all of our members for coming along, as well as our generous sponsors G2 Legal and hosts L'Aperitivo.

The committee are looking forward to the year ahead and are excited to share more opportunities in the coming months for junior lawyers to get together and continue networking.



ADLA

Annual Dinner featuring Legal Awards

Sold out

197th Annual Dinner

President **Gaynor Williams** looks forward to welcoming Liverpool Law Society members and guests to the Dinner.

The audience will hear from guest speaker
**The Rt Hon the Baroness Hale
of Richmond DBE**



Freedom from Torture collection & raffle prizes to be won

On the night, attendees will have a chance to support the guest speaker's chosen charity, Freedom from Torture (Reg no. 1000340).

Raffle prizes :

- Morning coffee with Baroness Hale at her home
- Online call with Nazir Afzal OBE, former Chief Crown Prosecutor for North West of England and Chancellor of the University of Manchester
- Tour and tea at the House of Lords with Lord Alf Dubs, Labour peer
- Two tickets to see Gladiator Live at the Royal Albert Hall, London

And the 2024 Legal award winners will be revealed!

S P O N S O R E D B Y



Conferences Roundup

2024 Employment Law Conference



Patrick from CLIO

The Liverpool Law Society hosted the 2024 Employment Law Conference on 2 October 2024. Chaired by John Hyde, the event featured prominent speakers such as Regional Employment Judge David Franey, David Jones, Patrick Keeney, Michael Malone, Martin Mensah, and David Tinkler.

The conference covered a wide range of interesting topics across the various changes happening in employment law in the past year:

Firstly, David Jones tackled the subject of Sex, Lies and Employment Law, discussing the future of employment law under a new government. Key aspects include the Labour’s Employment Rights Bill, which seeks to enhance family-friendly work policies and elevate living standards through robust trade unions and collective bargaining. David walked attendees through the potential effects of “fire and rehire” practice, new rights for flexible working and work/life balance, statutory sick pay reforms, a change to single status of “worker”, extending the time limit for Employment Tribunal claims and establishing a Fair Work Agency.

Michael Malone subsequently examined the difficulties employers encounter when rights are at odds, citing notable cases such as *Preddy v Bull*, *Thomas v Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Trust*, and *Eweida v British Airways* to illustrate court rulings and the applied legal tests.

Following a brief refreshment break, Patrick Keeney from Clio, the event’s sponsor, discussed the transformative impact of AI on the legal industry. He addressed the specific challenges that AI presents for firms of varying sizes and highlighted critical factors to consider when adopting and integrating new technologies in the legal sector.

Regional Employment Judge David Franey then provided updates on the judiciary going into judicial resources, administration, panel composition, recording of hearings, evidence from abroad, rule changes, and the HMCTS reform programme.

Attendees then got a close look at whistleblowing with David Tinkler. He discussed what constitutes a qualifying disclosure under the Employment Rights Act 1996, speaking about a long running case he had been working on.

Finally, Martin Mensah reviewed the significant employment law cases from 2024, including discussing further the case of *Thomas v Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Trust* and going through the case of *Commissioners for HMRC v PGMOL*. Martin also included discussions on the implications of recent case law, such as the *Tesco Stores Ltd v USDAW* and others case, which addressed the issue of “fire and rehire” practices. Additionally, the conference touched on the challenges employers face with serial complainers, as illustrated by the *Hope v British Medical Association* case.

Overall, the conference provided a comprehensive overview of current trends and issues in employment law, offering valuable insights for legal professionals and HR practitioners. A special thank you to Jo Downey for organising yet another fantastic conference!

Rory Manning
Trainee Solicitor
CG Professional

Liverpool Law Society – Family Finance Conference 2024

This year’s Family Finance Conference took place on Wednesday 25 September 2024. Taylor Wessing LLP (located at the Edward Pavilion, Albert Dock) helpfully agreed to host the session for the second year running.

District Judge Sheren Guirguis kindly accepted the invitation to Chair this year - she provided a warm welcome to all delegates, and encouraged an interactive and inclusive session, all the more important as this year’s conference was again a hybrid session, with delegates attending both in person and remotely.

We first heard from Max Lewis of 29 Bedford Row with his crash course in Pre-Nuptial Agreements aptly named “Pre-Nups and Downs – Making and Breaking Agreements”. In addition to providing an overview of the relevant recent case authorities, covering long marriages, short marriages, where there are children, and childless marriages, Max helpfully provided some template wording to assist practitioners. The segment was brought to a conclusion with both Max and District Judge Guirguis giving their own insights and opinions about the current state of law and likely changes in the near future.

We then heard from Tom Hynes of Oriel Chambers, who visited the topic of conduct in financial remedy proceedings. Tom gave us a helpful refresher of the key principles and practical steps that practitioners should be mindful of when running or indeed defending conduct cases. Prior to lunch we heard from Charles Hale KC, joint Head of Chambers at 4 Paper Buildings, who joined us remotely. Charles focussed on the current hot topic of Non-Court Dispute Resolution and Costs Orders

with his segment “Blessed are the Peacemakers for they shall avoid Costs Orders”. In a landscape that is increasingly focussed on Non-Court Dispute Resolution – particularly following the changes to the Family Procedure Rules 2010 which came into effect on 29 April 2024 - Charles’ helpful insight was invaluable for this year’s conference.

After a much-welcomed networking lunch, including sandwiches and a fabulous selection of cakes, we returned to a review of disability as a Section 25 factor from Naomh Gallagher of St John’s Buildings. Naomh again gave a helpful overview of the recent and applicable case authorities in various scenarios, and her helpful talk sparked some insightful discussion between delegates and our speakers about the definition of disability itself.

To conclude our day, we were joined by Alexis Campbell KC, joint Head of Chambers at 29 Bedford Row, who gave a much-awaited Family Finance Round Up. Alexis’ talk was accompanied by an incredibly helpful handout at which I am sure delegates have since padded through on a number of occasions to assist them in their daily practice.

The day was extremely well received, with the quality of the speakers and the relevance of their topics appreciated by all. A huge thank you to all the speakers and of course to those who helped put the conference together – you all know who you are!

As we (already!) look forward to next years’ conferences, which will hopefully be just as successful (if not more so) than the last, if there are any topics of particular interest, please do contact Jo Downey.

Laura Spence
Associate
Hill Dickinson LLP

Clinical Negligence Conference 2024

On 09 October 2024, Liverpool Law Society held its annual Clinical Negligence Conference.

The event was chaired by HHJ Graham Wood KC who gave a warm welcome to all delegates before the introduction of Helen Stanley, Litigation Midwife of Leigh Day who gave an interesting and moving guide on supporting clients through an obstetric negligence claim. Helen’s passion for her work was tangible. Helen offered practical advice on how to support bereft parents during litigation and how to practically navigate this difficult arena from a pastoral point of view. The warmth and kindness that Helen shows to her clients shone through her session.

Dr Kara Dent, Consultant Obstetrician and of KD Medicolegal Services was a suitable following in her discussion of the antenatal pathway and pitfalls in care. It felt at times like this conference was set up expressly for my benefit as the topics thus far were remarkably close to my heart. Dr Dent spoke about the risks and benefits of various avenues and what to bear in mind about a woman’s health concerns and needs when deciding what route to take.

A detailed and step-by-step guide to the standard of care to be expected when dealing with claims concerning Obstetric Anal Sphincter Injuries (OASI) was considered by Dr Gillian Fowler, Consultant Urogynaecologist who works out of Liverpool Women’s NHS Foundation Trust. Dr Fowler provided a very insightful and helpful session about OASI; how such injuries can be prevented and at the very least the risks managed to the lowest level possible.

The morning concluded and after a break for lunch the afternoon was kickstarted by Helen Neville, DDJ and

Deputy head of Clinical Negligence at Bond Turner. “Raiders of the Lost Years” was the title adding some light-hearted humour to the day! Helen spoke about the calculation of lost years claims and how best to incorporate different elements into schedules, A discussion of recent case reports was both useful and insightful. Tips on how best to deal with inheritance was a great personal takeaway.

Dr Kayvan Khadjooi was a last-minute replacement for Professor Alan Fletcher and we were grateful to his attendance at short notice. Dr Khadjooi spoke about Hypertension and Atrial Fibrillation as risk factors for stroke. It was startling to appreciate that Stroke is a leading cause of adult disability which causes a greater range of disabilities than any other condition with 25% of people in residential nursing care have had a stroke and it being the second commonest cause of dementia.

Elizabeth Francis, specialist clinical negligence barrister and CEDR accredited mediator discussed the benefits of mediation in clinical negligence cases and how financial compensation is rarely the goal of the injured person, but rather a need to be acknowledged, for the impact of the injury to be recognised and often how the need of a simple apology would suffice.

The day was completed by a roundup of case law and a general update from David Pilling, Barrister from Liverpool Civil Law. David can always be relied upon to bring his wit to another absorbing session.

An incredibly special thank you to Jo Downey for organising yet another fantastic conference!

Kathryn Sharkey,
Solicitor
Fletchers Solicitors

Opening of the Legal Year 2024



speech concluded that “let’s kill all the lawyers” is not a condemnation of the legal profession but a recognition of its crucial role in society. This message was forefront in all the speeches including the Lord Chancellor’s speech that was focused on the rule of law and the importance of our independent legal system. I was in good company for the meal, sitting with representatives from the Law Society, Danish Law Society, Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland Law Society. The following day I joined my friends from the Joint V Law Societies, Birmingham, Bristol, Manchester and Leeds for a breakfast in Chancery Lane, followed by a short bus trip to Westminster Abbey, chatting to Mark Evans, who is now Vice President of the Law Society.



On 30 September 2024 and 1 October 2024, I was honoured to be invited by the Law Society of England and Wales to the Opening of the Legal Year celebrations in London.

On the Monday evening I attended a dinner at the Great Hall, Lincolns Inn. The name ‘Great Hall’ is fitting, the hall reminded me from a scene from Harry Potter, dark wooden wall panels low lighting, portraits on the walls and the whole of the upper part of the plaster of the north wall is occupied by an extensive painting, some 45 feet wide by 40 feet

high, entitled “Justice, A Hemicycle of Lawgivers”. There was an impressive list of guests from all over the world and the speakers included Nick Emmerson, President of the Law Society of England and Wales, Sam Townend, Chair of the Bar Council, the Lord Chancellor Shabana Mahmood, and Faith Odhiambo, President of the Law Society of Kenya. Faith Odhiambo’s talk was both educating and well thought out. She referenced Shakespear Henry V1 Part 2, and a character Dick who said, “let’s kill all the lawyers”, followed by examples of the need for law throughout the world. The

I was in awe looking and learning about the history of the costumes worn by the lawyers, dignitaries and Judges who formed part of the procession into Westminster Abbey. There were all colours of the rainbow and lots, and I mean lots, of wigs to be seen. It was very enjoyable to speak to some of the Judiciary and to hear about the stories behind their costumes. Personally, the High Court Judge’s costume was my favourite, they consist of red robes with white fluffy collars, reminiscent of the Christmas season. There was a real sense of a celebration, but also pride in our legal profession.



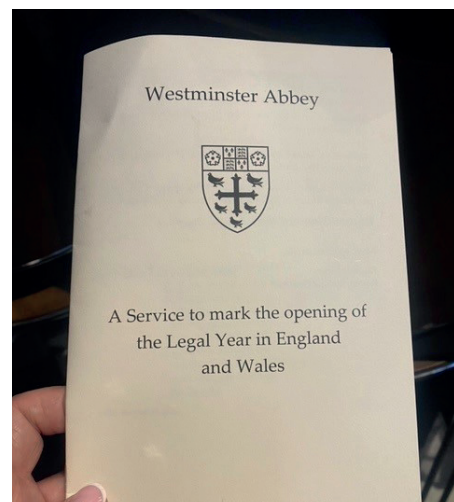
The speeches and the service focused again on the importance of the legal profession in today's society. The congregation was also treated to singing from the Abbey choir, and it brought back memories of the late the Queen the day she sat alone in the Abbey during covid.

After the service at Westminster Abbey the procession was led to the Lord Chancellor's reception in Westminster Hall, Palace of Westminster. This was where Queen Elizabeth lay in state in September 2022, and it is marked with

a gold plaque in the floor. There were refreshments available and a chance to catch up with people and savour the moment standing in a place rich in history. Suffice to say I thoroughly enjoyed my 24 hours in London, and I would urge anyone who gets a chance to attend the opening of the legal year, to do it.

Thank you to the Law Society of England and Wales for the kind invitation.

Gaynor Williams
President



The 2024 Legal Walk – Justice Matters!

Photography by Ray Farley



I still remember the first Liverpool Legal Walk in October 2012 when a small group of us gathered at the Pier Head. For all we knew it might have been a 'one off'. Who would have predicted that by October 2024, a record turnout of 270 walkers from 30 businesses would be setting off from the QEII Law Courts for what has become, a major event in the local legal calendar? The weather was friendly to us as we completed the now familiar 5k route along the waterfront and across the city centre to Lady of Mann Pub in Dale Street for a much-needed beer/prosecco! The general view that this was one of the best of all.

Of course it is not all about having a great time. The idea is to raise funds for the Access to Justice Foundation who in turn provide vital funding to agencies that give free legal advice and help to those in need. At the time of writing, we have raised £5,350.50 (including Gift Aid) which has exceeded our target of £5000. The Just Giving Page is open until 31st December 2024 so there is plenty of time left...

[Liverpool Law Society is fundraising for The Access to Justice Foundation \(justgiving.com\)](https://www.justgiving.com/liverpool-law-society)

I would like to thank the sponsors, University of Law and The Barrister Group, without whose contribution there would have been a record number of thirsty lawyers.



Liverpool Legal Walk 2012

Thank you also to everyone who helped organise the event and of course everyone who took part.

We are again grateful for the brilliant photography of Ray Farley. There is an album from the day which can be viewed at: <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjBKXA8>

Steve Cornforth
Steve Cornforth Consultancy



My experience of being a volunteer marshall

On the 1st of October, I was a marshall for the Liverpool legal walk. Setting off from Liverpool Crown Court, a cloudy evening was the setting for our 5km walk. The previous day the rain had not stopped so we were lucky to avoid it that evening.

Heading down to the celebrated Albert Docks, I felt proud to be amongst hundreds of people raising money for charity. I was able to meet barristers, solicitors, paralegals and fellow law students in a convivial atmosphere, no doubt helped by the break in our traditional weather.

It was fascinating to fall into step with walkers more knowledgeable than me about the history of the law courts and the surrounding area. I hadn't realised before the Neoclassical aspects of St. George's Hall on Lime Street, or its designated Grade I listed status.

Despite my new-comer status, my main role was to help fund-raisers avoid getting lost and ending up in the Mersey. No-one was left behind and all checkpoints were successfully navigated. A wonderful way to navigate the streets of Liverpool. Marshalling is very much for me.

Niamh Emes
Second year law student
University of Liverpool



Business and AI



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



Julie Johnson

Technology has the ability to transform our working lives and the impact of AI on what we do day to day is predicted to be nothing short of seismic.

For those of us who remember fax machines, who have the introduction of email and smartphones, we know that the way we work now is very different from previous generations. So what comes next and, crucially, how should we prepare for it? At Liverpool BID Company, we are thinking about how we can support businesses at this vital stage.

A new report on generative AI by Thomson Reuters reveals that most people in professional services think AI will be part of their future, and they want to start working out how and when.

Services like legal, tax and accounting, as well as government offices, have been used to adopt new technology to make work more efficient, easier to connect, saving time and resources. AI promises to be as disruptive to those technologies that have gone before, creating new content or easy to recognise and understand images. Its usage is not widespread, but that is why now is the time to investigate it.



In the report, a quarter of respondents said they were already using AI, or were planning to integrate it into their services. A third said they were still considering whether to do it or not. Many are still thinking about how to incorporate AI into their day to day work and are not sure of cost or spend.

As with any new technology, the best approach is to begin with mapping current activity and looking to identify ways in which AI can support. Understanding the technology and its capability is a vital step, to know how it can enhance services and offers. There are currently no specifically designed AI products purely for professional services, but they are just around the corner. Saving time or adding an offer that a business can provide is an important way of harnessing new technology.

The next step is to look at skills. What members of staff need to enhance their own skills to use their technology, whose roles might be

most impacted by the technology and how it can be added to their role. This is not about replacing people and their roles but looking at those within the team who may be using this technology on a day to day basis and how this might transform the work they do.

The next is to think about rates and pricings. If technology is able to remove much of the slower work that takes up time, what other services could be added to those who can take on more work? How far should rates or amounts paid by clients for various services be evolved to reflect the new technology? What new services can be offered by way of the AI tech.

New technology often makes people feel nervous, but technology is there to enhance an offer and ensure resources are used in the best way possible. Aligning skills, offers, opportunity and resources can ensure that businesses who want to explore new technology can make it work for them.

The Liverpool Law Society Conkerton Lecture 2024

Photography by Adam Kenrick



On 10 October 2024 Mr Justice Cobb gave the Conkerton Memorial lecture in the magnificent surroundings of Rathbone Hall in the Port of Liverpool Building on the subject of ‘Justice must be seen to be done’

This was a fascinating broad ranging address which appealed to lawyers at every stage of their career and from many different disciplines and referred appropriately to **John and Mary Conkerton** after whom the lecture series is named.

Mr Justice Cobb opened his talk by reference to his student days in September 1981 at Liverpool University shortly after the Toxteth Riots and the impact such disturbance had upon his early legal studies. The impact of such disturbance and the use of swift justice in deterring disorder this year was developed later in the talk.

Naturally the opening segment of the talk referenced the famous case of *R V Sussex justices ex parte McCarthy*. There was a thoughtful review of the issues determined by the case and a reflection upon the key words of Lord Hewart – “Justice must be seen to be done” which are considered to be the most quoted in legal discourse in the next 100 years. We then enjoyed an exploration of the impact of

the case over the following decades and its influence may even be perceived to extend to Article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights. Such is the continuing relevance of the dicta that the case was referred to very recently in the long running Greensill litigation.

The point that **Mr Justice Cobb** emphasised is that procedural propriety in the administration of justice is sacred. The perception of the wider public is crucial. It is for the judge to take the lead in determining potential bias or personal interest.

Mr Justice Cobb went on to develop themes relating to the wider application of the principle. These included transparency and openness. There followed a commentary on key subsequent cases starting with 1913 *Scott v Scott* which provided the impetus for the famous phrase from the American Louis Brandeis “sunlight is said to be the best of disinfectants”.

Mr Justice Cobb continued with an explanation of the areas where there are the four exceptions to the general rule of openness as set out by **Lord Reed** in *A v British Broadcasting Corporation* 2014. Our speaker commented favourably on the growing trend for transparency in the Family Court and the Court of

Protection and the positive work of **Sir James Mumby** in promoting this concept. The use of Transparency Orders was explained to those not familiar to this area of work.

The fundamental importance of the concept was then admirably explored. The 4 strands identified were to keep the public informed, to hold judges to account, to buttress public confidence in the justice system and reinforce the rule of law.

The activities of the judiciary to achieve greater levels of transparency was considered in considerable depth and then the impediments to openness. The failings of the judicial system were touched upon.

The great importance and significance of the phrase is likely to continue for the next 100 years too. **Mr Justice Cobb** gave insightful answers to the questions put to him. Liverpool Law Society is most grateful to **Mr Justice Cobb** for the considerable time and thought which he devoted to the lecture.

David Tournafond

A link for the full talk is available: <https://www.judiciary.uk/speech-by-mr-justice-cobb-justice-must-be-seen-to-be-done/>





CELEBRATION FOR NEW ENTRANTS TO THE LEGAL PROFESSION

LIVERPOOL LAW SOCIETY WOULD LIKE TO INVITE NEWLY QUALIFIED SOLICITORS, BARRISTERS, CHARTERED PATENT ATTORNEYS AND FELLOWS FROM CILEX FROM THE LIVERPOOL CITY REGION AND SURROUNDING AREA WHO QUALIFIED DURING 2024 TO CELEBRATE THE LAUNCH OF THEIR CAREER IN THE LEGAL PROFESSION

WED 29 JAN 2025	RACQUET CLUB CHAPEL STREET, LIVERPOOL
	5.30PM FOR 6PM

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

★ ARRIVAL DRINK ★ CANAPES ★ PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY ★ TRAINING VOUCHER

ALL THOSE QUALIFYING WILL BE PRESENTED WITH A CERTIFICATE OF CONGRATULATIONS FROM

HIS HONOUR JUDGE MENARY KC DL
RESIDENT JUDGE & HONORARY RECORDER OF LIVERPOOL

MEMBERS OF THE MERSEYSIDE JLD ARE ALSO INVITED TO BOOK A PLACE TO NETWORK WITH SENIOR MEMBERS OF LIVERPOOL LAW SOCIETY.

THIS EVENT IS FREE TO ATTEND BUT YOU MUST BOOK YOUR PLACE.

SPONSORED BY



[Book Here](#)

The Housing Ombudsman “*Learning from: Severe Maladministration*” in respect of decants – a review



Clare Jones

In the September edition of the Housing Ombudsman’s Service “*Learning from: Severe Maladministration*” reports, the Housing Ombudsman (“the Ombudsman”) sets out various key learning points that social landlords need to take into account in respect of their handling of decants. The full version of the report can be found [here](https://www.housingombudsman.org.uk) - [Learning from Severe Maladministration \(housingombudsman.org.uk\)](https://www.housingombudsman.org.uk). The main theme arising from the vast majority of these cases is that landlords need to carefully consider the individuals involved and their specific needs, together with the importance of effective communication.

It is important for landlords to appreciate that a temporary move can place an extreme amount of stress on a tenant and their family, and that stress can be reduced by:

- clear communication regarding the type and location of accommodation they will be moved to;
- the timescales for the move;
- the process and requirements in respect of storage of the tenant’s possessions; and
- the provision from the landlord in respect of subsistence payments and expenses.

The tenant’s particular circumstances also need to be considered. For example, one particular case involved a heavily pregnant tenant whose landlord failed to

consider the impact that uncertainty surrounding her accommodation would have on the first few days of her baby’s life, should her baby be born during that period.

Landlords need to ensure that temporary accommodation offered is suitable for the tenant and their family at the time offered, and also throughout the period of the decant, if for a prolonged period. Needs may change over time. Whilst it may be appropriate to move a tenant into a hotel on a short-term basis, if it becomes necessary for a tenant to be decanted for a longer period than initially expected, they may need to be moved into a more suitable type of accommodation.

The location of the temporary accommodation is also important. Day to day responsibilities may be made more difficult for tenants depending on the distance between their home and the decant property.

Decant policies must also be fit for purpose and, crucially, applied in every case.

Decants must also take place as expeditiously as possible, particularly where a property has been found to be uninhabitable. Landlords need to ensure their systems account for the need for urgency where the facts of the case require it.

In summary, quoting the report directly, landlords need to “take an empathetic and human centric approach on every move needed”. The Ombudsman suggests that landlords should explore whether it is appropriate for a tenant to be given a named contact whilst they are decanted from their home to ensure that the tenant does not feel they have been left in temporary accommodation and ignored.

The Ombudsman will no doubt continue to monitor this issue, and make awards of compensation where they consider tenants have not been treated in an appropriate manner when it comes to temporary moves. It is therefore crucial that social landlords review, and where necessary, update their policies as appropriate and follow them correctly.

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Opening of the Legal Year 2024 at Anglican Cathedral, Liverpool



Anglican cathedral congregation opening of the legal year

On 13 October 2024 I was honoured to be part of the procession for the Opening of the Legal Year at the Anglican Cathedral, Liverpool.

The Anglican Cathedral is the largest Cathedral in Britain, and the eighth largest church in the world. It was constructed between 1904 and 1978 and survived two World Wars. The inside of the cathedral is just as impressive as the outside, it has large stained glassed windows and classical and gothic elements that are

both monumental and spiritual.

The procession was led by the Lord Lieutenant's procession, followed by the Cathedral procession, the High Sheriff's procession, the Judicial and Legal procession, the Academic procession and the Civic procession.

The Cathedral Choir opened the service with Tune Te Deum in G, Ralph Vaughan Williams, an enchanting song, sang beautifully.



Chief Constable of Merseyside Police Serena Kennedy Gaynor Williams and Merseyside Police and Crime Commissioner Emily Spurrell

Readings were heard from **His Honour Judge Neil Flewitt KC** and **His Honour Judge Graham Wood KC**. **Rt Hon Lord Justice Edis**, Court of Appeal gave a sermon that followed on from the message in **HHJ Wood's** reading from the gospel according to John, he also talked about the rule of law and the society in which we live in.

The service ended with a blessing from **The Bishop of Liverpool** before people gathered in the large entrance to help themselves to tea and coffee and take advantage of the chance to speak to Judges, university representatives and law students.

This is an annual event in the Anglican Cathedral, and it is also open to the general public. It is a colourful and enjoyable occasion, and I would urge anyone to attend the event next year.

Thank you to the **Prof John Mohin**, the High Sheriff of Merseyside for the kind invitation.

Gaynor Williams
President

Empowering the Community: Paul Crowley & Co Solicitors Deliver Essential Legal Insights at The Blue Base



Carla Neal (Solicitor), Amy Powell (Everton Cares Coordinator) from Everton in the Community, and Matthew Campbell (Legal Assistant)

Paul Crowley & Co Solicitors were warmly welcomed by Everton in the Community (EitC) to The Blue Base. The venue, located at the heart of Everton, was bustling with activity as members of the local neighbourhood gathered for an informative session on Wills and Lasting Powers of Attorney. This event was organised by Amy Powell, the Everton Cares Coordinator, who invited specialists from Paul Crowley & Co to share their knowledge and provide valuable insights on these important topics.

The presentation was delivered by Solicitor **Carla Neal** and dedicated Legal Assistant **Matthew Campbell**, both from the law firm's Private Client Department. Their expertise and approachable manner made the complex subject matter accessible and engaging for all participants.

Amy began the proceedings by introducing Paul Crowley & Co to the assembled audience, highlighting the importance of understanding Wills and Lasting Powers of Attorney. Amy's introduction set the tone for an informative and interactive session.

Matthew outlined the fundamentals of having a Will, covering the essential components, the legal requirements, and the potential consequences of not having a Will in place. Matt's clear and concise explanations helped demystify the process, making it easier for attendees to grasp the importance of having a legally sound Will.

Carla discussed Lasting Powers of Attorney (LPAs), explaining the different types of LPA – Property and Financial Affairs, and Health and Welfare – and the circumstances under which each would be applicable. Carla also provided practical advice on how to choose an attorney and the steps involved in setting up an LPA. Her insights were particularly valuable for those considering how to plan for the future and ensure their affairs are managed according to their wishes.

Throughout the presentation, **Carla** and **Matthew** encouraged questions from the audience, creating an interactive and engaging atmosphere. Attendees were eager to learn and took advantage of the opportunity to seek clarification on various aspects of Wills and LPAs. The presenters' friendly demeanour and willingness to address individual concerns made the session highly beneficial for all participants.

Carla commented, *"The collaboration between EitC and ourselves proved successful in highlighting the significant benefits of community-focused initiatives. These initiatives foster support and empowerment among residents, equip the local community with essential knowledge, enable them to make informed decisions about their future, and provide peace of mind to ensure that one's wishes are respected."*

The event concluded with a sincere thank you from **Amy**, who expressed her gratitude to Carla and Matthew for their time and participation, encouraging people to take the next steps in securing their legal affairs.



Council Member's Report October 2024



Nina Ferris

After 6 years as council member for Merseyside I am hanging up my Law Society Boots and passing the torch to Jeremy Myers to continue to represent our local members at Chancery Lane.

I did not know what to expect when I first joined Council and it was overwhelming to be in a room with 100 council members who appeared to know everything about the governance, history and commercial direction of the Law Society. However I was pleasantly surprised at the diversity of Council and how welcoming both the Council Members and staff are to a new Council Member who was last at Chancery Lane to pick up her admission certificate.

What I learned over the first few months on Council was that the work that goes on behind the scenes by the policy and executive team with input and oversight from Council and the specialist was far greater than I had realised. This was apparent from the reading materials for each council meeting alone! Over the time that I have been on Council improvements have been made to structure to make it more representative of the profession as a whole with more seats allocated to growing sections of the

profession such as In House lawyers and Junior Lawyers, and in respect of good governance such as the introduction of the rule that a Council Member may only sit for three terms. It has also seen its first black and first Asian Muslim president.

Overall I have also seen an improvement in the working relationship with the SRA and other bodies, although there remains a tension with the members of the Law Society pushing to hold the SRA more robustly to account.

The Law Society executive team and office holders have built a good relationship with government departments and ministers and will no doubt continue to do so to influence and persuade those in power of the importance of solicitors and a fair legal aid system to a working justice system (and indeed the importance of a strong justice system and the rule of law itself). They have also conducted work internationally to open up new markets for lawyers.

The Law Society has helped members through very difficult times and provided resource and assistance through the covid pandemic, the rapid rise of legal tech and, most recently assistance to immigration lawyers during the unrest over the summer. It has also celebrated solicitors across the country with the introduction of the Legal Heroes awards.

The last meeting of the year was over 2 days followed by the AGM and we discussed the incoming president's year plan. **Richard Atkinson** took over as president and highlighted his three key themes as : Justice Matters, Pride in the Profession, and Celebrating 200 Years of the Law Society. There was also discussion over the SQE and how

it is progressing, including whether it is actually opening up the legal profession to those from lower socio economic backgrounds considering the rising cost of preparatory courses and whether there should be more rigorous quality assurance procedures by the SRA for those providing such courses. Council also considered the development of the Law Society Strategy for the next three year period.

Council is made up of a group of passionate people who have their members interest at heart and will speak up for them at Council meetings when important policy issues are discussed and debated. They do not always agree as we are a broad church and what is right for one section may not be quite the same for another, but there are issues which are of interest to us all. Entry to the profession and making sure aspiring solicitors can access courses and be ready to enter the profession is just one. The importance of a functioning and funded justice system which underpins both democracy and the UK as a place to do business are just two examples.

My time on Council has also been enjoyable – I have made friends and acquaintances with those I would never have otherwise come across in my professional life, junior lawyers working in house for a local authority, a criminal and PI lawyers from around the country, magic circle partners, sole general practitioners and solicitor judges. They have all been willing to share wisdom, gripes and the occasional pint in the seven stars. I thank you for letting me represent Liverpool for my terms and hope to still see you at an event soon.

Nina Ferris
Council Member 2018-24

Directors' meetings with Councillors & MPs

Liverpool Law Society has held two recent meetings, one with councillors of local authorities in our region and one with MPs of local constituencies. In both, the society had the opportunity to raise issues our members and lawyers see when working in our communities and lobby for change.

We were joined in our first meeting with councillors on 3 October 2024 by Councillor **Christine Howard** of Sefton Council, Councillor **Jane Corbett** of Liverpool City Council, **Matt Jones**, Head of Legal and Democratic Services of St Helen's Council, **Iolanda Puzio**, Director of Law and Governance of Liverpool City Council and **Moira Bridge** of Wirral Council. University of Liverpool Law Clinic sent us a presentation to talk through about the free legal advice they give on various issues including advising families and young people on special educational needs law. They highlighted issues they are seeing through their clinic, including the process for applying for educational health care plans for children who may have special educational needs and the issues of children not being able to access the appropriate schools and/or resources due to issues with specialist school places. An idea of forming a working group across councils, the Liverpool Law Society and those dealing with the legal issues in the community was explored.

Sarah Mansfield, Liverpool Law Society Joint Hon Secretary gave a housing update on changes on the horizon for the rental market, with the Renters' Rights Bill having had its first reading in parliament. Sarah offered her thoughts to the councillors on the proposed end of no-fault evictions and increased protections for tenants. A legislative update followed, covering some of the key themes of the legislation proposed in the King's speech earlier this year, after Labour secured victory to form a new government. Bills in the pipeline include those that impact the justice system in criminal law, social justice matters including a new Hillsborough law, an employment rights bill, housing and planning reform and an arbitration bill.

We were joined in our second meeting with MPs on 11 October 2024 by **Kim Johnson MP** (Liverpool Riverside), **Peter Dowd MP** (Bootle) and **Ian Byrne MP** (Liverpool West Derby). **Cameron Dunleavy** from University of Liverpool Law Clinic presented on the issues seen from the advice the clinic gives on special educational needs law, as was given to the councillors in the first meeting. **Gaynor Williams**, Liverpool Law Society President spoke about the provision homelessness and housing advice within the LCR followed by **Sarah Mansfield** who gave a housing update on no-fault evictions. The President reported on the upcoming opening of the Wirral Advice Centre. **Ian Byrne MP** encouraged the forming of a sub-group to look at how providers of housing advice can collaborate and reported on funding that had been secured from parliament for the Dovecot Social Justice Hub. **James Mannouch**, Deputy Vice President & Joint Hon Secretary and visitor **Ian Townley** from Jackson Lees gave an overview on legal aid rates and the significant unmet need for legal advice from those who can no longer access legal aid. James reported that the Law Society of England and Wales had requested a 20% uplift in


rates and research shows that a fifth of legal aid providers have disappeared over the last five years. I raised legislation that came into force under the last government which prescribed bandings for salaries for non-UK national employees on employer-sponsored skilled work visas. These are blanket salary bandings across the country, risking employee talent being drained from our region in the North-West to London and the South, where such salaries are more affordable for employers. **Peter Dowd MP** agreed to follow this up. The same legislative update was given to the councillors as was provided to the MPs.

We thank the speakers, councillors and MPs that attended the meetings for their time and support.


The next meeting with local councillors is on Thursday 16 January 2025 at 1pm and the next meeting with MPs is on Friday 14 March 2025 at 1pm.

Lauren Cannon

Parliamentary Liaison Officer, Liverpool Law Society



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Various exhibitors at the Northern Pupillage Fair

Success at Speed Mooting's first ever Northern Pupillage Fair!



John Dove delivering an Advocacy Club exhibition

Last month, **Speed Mooting** hosted its first ever Northern Pupillage Fair, Sponsored by BPP, at the Liner Hotel Liverpool.

Aspiring lawyers travelled to Liverpool from all over the UK to attend this event. With most events of this nature taking place online or in the South, Speed Mooting took the initiative to create an event that would allow aspiring lawyers in the North the opportunity to network with a wide variety of professionals.

Speed Mooting founder and criminal barrister, **John Dove**, had the following to say this about the event: *"I have had this idea for several years and felt that now was the perfect time to organise this event. I am very proud to be levelling the playing field and providing opportunities for all aspiring lawyers."*

As an organisation that has been assisting aspiring barristers and solicitors join the legal profession for over a decade, Speed Mooting is committed to doing all that it can to help the next generation of lawyers on their journey into the profession. With this new venture, Speed Mooting is proud to be able to promote accessibility, meet the demands of law students and to keep the cost of attending a pupillage fair financially viable for all."

There were a wide variety of exhibitors in attendance at the fair, including chambers, law firms, charities and other

organisations on hand to assist aspiring lawyers build their skill base! In addition, there were several exciting and interactive talks which proved to be very valuable for attendees. The talks covered a variety of topics including: the Bar Course, criminal law, chancery law and an Advocacy Club exhibition.

The event was a huge success with record numbers of students and aspiring lawyers attending.

Following on from the event, many attendees and exhibitors have shared



Matt Curtis talking about his route to the bar

their feedback about the event online. Charterhouse Chambers Director **Nick Roberts** said:

*“Thank you to Speed Mooting, **John Dove** and **Hayley Crombleholme** for inviting Charterhouse Chambers to their inaugural Northern Pupillage Fair on Saturday.*

*This was a very well-run informative event in which our barristers **Dan Wood** (Head of Pupillage), **Abigail Lenart** and **Rebecca Taggart**, ably supported by clerks **Aaron Woods** and **Joshua Dooley** provided insightful and practical guidance to prospective future barristers.*

The enthusiasm and willingness to learn was tangible in the room throughout the day!

From our perspective we met many hugely talented individuals who will undoubtedly go on to have brilliant careers at the Bar.”

The event was sponsored by leading law school BPP. **Jo Anne Pugh**, Dean of BPP Law School said: *“There are relatively few pupillage fairs and most are either delivered online or are hosted in London. So, we didn’t need to think twice when we were asked to support this much needed event”.*



Matt Curtis (BPP), John Dove (Speed Mooting) and Hayley Crombleholme (Speed Mooting)

Speed Mooting is pleased to confirm that the Northern Pupillage Fair will be an annual event going forward. To keep up to date with the latest, or to pre-register for 2025, the webpage is speedmooting.com/pupillage-fair.

If your organisation would like some

information about exhibiting at the Northern Pupillage Fair in 2025, you can contact the team by email at info@speedmooting.com.

John Dove, criminal barrister at Charterhouse Chambers and founder of Speed Mooting.



Various exhibitors at the Northern Pupillage Fair



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



Farewell to Our Housing Supervising Solicitor, Siobhan Taylor Ward

Last month marked a bittersweet moment for the Vauxhall Law Centre as we bid farewell to our Housing Supervising Solicitor, **Siobhan Taylor Ward**. Siobhan’s presence will be profoundly missed—not only by our dedicated team but also by the many clients she served with compassion and commitment. Her impact on the lives of individuals across our region cannot be overstated, as she tirelessly worked to ensure that everyone had access to their rights and advocated for justice with unwavering determination.

Siobhan’s contributions extended far beyond her day-to-day responsibilities.

She was a well-known advocate for improving the legal aid system and championed the rights of the most vulnerable in our society, both locally and nationally. Her work has empowered individuals to assert their rights, and she has been instrumental in fostering a legal community that understands and responds to the needs of those it serves, even in the most challenging circumstances.

Siobhan’s journey with Vauxhall Law Centre began as a volunteer, progressing to a board member role before she officially joined our team in 2021. During her time here, she transformed the housing department from a one-person operation into

a dynamic team of four. Siobhan inspired countless volunteers to appreciate the impact of a career in social welfare law and played a key role in helping the centre secure vital Legal Aid contracts.

We are immensely grateful for Siobhan’s dedication and service as a true Vauxhall Law Centre Legal Eagle. We wish her the very best in her new role and all future endeavours.

A Fond Farewell to Ruth



In addition to **Siobhan**, we also bid farewell to **Ruth**, who spent her last (official) day volunteering at the Law Centre after three years of dedicated service. Ruth’s passion for her work and her vast knowledge of welfare benefits have been an inspiration to both staff and volunteers alike. She has helped train numerous individuals, ensuring that her clients receive the justice they deserve.

As is fitting for her generous spirit,

Ruth didn't leave without treating us to delicious coffee and pineapple cakes! On behalf of everyone at Vauxhall Law Centre, we extend our heartfelt thanks to Ruth for everything she has done. We will truly miss her!

Raising money for Access to Justice



This year's Liverpool Legal Walk was a resounding success! We extend our gratitude to all the organisations that participated in support of The Access to Justice Foundation, and to sponsors, including the Liverpool Law Society and The University of Law and Carpenter's Solicitors. Your support is invaluable in promoting access to justice.

Congratulations to David Kenny!

We are thrilled to congratulate our Welfare Rights advisor, **David Kenny**, for passing his SQE2 (Solicitors Qualifying Exam) last month and becoming a qualified solicitor! Everyone at the Law Centre is incredibly proud of David's dedication and hard work to reach this milestone. His qualification was made



possible through the Social Welfare Solicitors Qualifying Fund, which aims to improve social mobility within the legal profession, address the recruitment and retention crisis in the Social Welfare and Legal Aid sector, and ultimately enhance access to justice for those who need it most. Well done, David!

Debt Advice at Homebaked Bakery

We are excited to announce our community initiative with Spirit of Shankly - Liverpool Supporters Union at Homebaked Anfield is expanding in service. From September onwards, every last Monday of the month, from 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM, you can drop in for debt advice from our new debt advisor. If we can't assist you on the day, we will arrange a follow-up appointment to address your issues. For more details on our debt advice service, please visit our website. We'll continue to offer welfare rights advice and support as well, so feel free to stop by anytime to speak with our expert advisors.



Drop-in Debt Advice Sessions

Drop-in for free advice
9:30am-3:00pm
on the **LAST MONDAY**
of every month at
HOMEBAKED

We can help you with

- Utility arrears
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- Bailiffs, and assistance with the bailiff complaint procedure.

0151 360 7777
Advice@VauxhallLawCentre.org.uk

Homebaked Community Bakery,
197-199 Oakfield Rd, Liverpool L4 0UF

Can you help Vauxhall Law Centre?

At Vauxhall Community Law & Information Centre, volunteers are the backbone of our organisation. Their dedication to supporting our work and commitment to promoting access to justice during the cost of living crisis has been immense. We get support from our volunteers in many different ways:-

- Our Board are volunteers, providing support and strategic direction for the organisation.
- Volunteers assist with our advice provision and representation.
- Volunteers help with our Triage work, helping clients book appointments, and helping to signpost them in the right direction.

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

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

Alternatively, we would be grateful if you would consider [donating](#) to support our organisation's work in providing access to justice to those who need it most. Further information can be found [here](#).

Regulation Update

November 2024

The latest Regulation news from Andrea Cohen of Weightmans LLP



Andrea Cohen

After the recent unseasonably warm days, we've definitely hit Autumn, with the heating kicking in not only in our homes and offices, but in the regulatory world as well, and the Compli team is back with our monthly round-up to update you on developments in the world of risk and compliance and recent disciplinary decisions.

Data breaches and cyber attacks

As a reminder of the importance of ensuring confidentiality and having appropriate security measures in place, a law firm specialising in criminal and military law has been reprimanded by the ICO after client details relating to 8,234 UK data subjects, including over 850 deemed to be at 'high-risk' of harm or detriment due to the special category of data, were accessed due to having insufficient security measures. It did not have multi-factor authentication (MFA) in place, outsourced its IT management to a third party under a contract signed in 2012 and relied on password strength etc.

Cyber attacks against law firms increased dramatically in the 12 months to August 2024, with a 77% rise in successful attacks, and almost 75% of top 100 law firms have, at some time, been impacted by cyber-attacks. In its recently published

annual Law Firms Survey, PwC notes that cyber threats are the main concern for law firms. As the large amount of data held is often very sensitive, firms are lucrative targets with hackers threatening to put the data on the internet or lock firms out until payment of a ransom.

If we, or our CyXcel team can help, please get in touch.

Response to SRA consultation

In previous months we have referred to the SRA's consultation on its financial penalty proposals, which closed on 20 September, the responses reported have not, to put it mildly, been favourable. The Law Society opposes the majority of the proposals, having serious concerns on the basis they are confusing, and appear 'flawed and inconsistent with the principles set out in the Legal Services Act', and it confirms its 'strong opposition to the SRA's ambitions for any further extension to its fining powers.' It also questions the timing, when the SRA is being investigated for its conduct in relation to the Axiom Ince and SSB case. The report of the findings has still not, at the date of writing, been published by the LSB. Local law societies, firms and individuals have also criticised the proposals. Watch this space!

SRA revised business plan 2024/25

The SRA has recently issued a revised business plan for the next 12 months. Points to note regarding SRA plans between November 2024 and October 2025 include:

- delivering its programme of proactive thematic reviews in key areas, including an AML review focused on source of funds, and a review on the roles of compliance officers.
- undertaking training record reviews and a thematic review focused on family law and landlord and tenant solicitors and firms, to understand

whether and how solicitors meet their professional obligations to maintain competence.

- continue to regulate proactively and strive towards a full-market understanding of AML, compliance approaches, risks and sanctions, and other core information
- develop the regulatory approach to AI
- expect to build the use of financial penalties, and the thematic team will continue to review key areas of interest

Transparency rules

We referred last month to CiLex regulation changes, requiring firms it regulates to publish price and service information for all legal services and raised the question as to whether the SRA would follow suit. On 30 September the SRA issued updated guidance and pricing templates and noted that as a result of its ongoing checks of websites and declarations made by firms that they are compliant, it has issued almost 500 warnings and fines for breaches since the Rules were introduced.

New practice notes and guidance

SRA guidance

- Transparency in price and service: [SRA | Transparency and in service | Solicitors Regulation Authority](#).
- SRA | Online reviews: [How to engage with them | Solicitors Regulation Authority](#)

Law Society practice notes

- Freelance Solicitors | [Freelance Solicitors | The Law Society](#)
- [Professional undertakings | The Law Society](#)
- [Social media | The Law Society](#)

Disciplinary and regulatory decisions

There have been a number of decisions and judgments reported since our last update, including:

Former partner struck off after 'sting' operation

A former partner was struck off following a conviction for attempting to engage in sexual communications with a minor. He was sentenced to a community order, including 20 rehabilitation activity days and placed on the sex offenders register for five years. The SDT approved the agreed outcome and he was struck off and ordered to pay £3,000 costs.

Struck off after conviction for blackmail

A solicitor has been struck off by the SDT and ordered to pay over £4000 costs following a conviction for blackmail. The solicitor had threatened a fellow director that he would go to the FCA if his settlement demands relating to his leaving the company were not met.

Solicitor suspended after losing company over £200,000

Approving an agreed outcome with the SRA, the SDT has suspended a sole practitioner for 12 months with conditions to be placed on his ability to practice at the end of the suspension period, following his 'reckless' participation or facilitation of transactions which bore the hallmarks of advance fee fraud. He also failed to complete an undertaking, allowed the client account to be used as a banking facility and failed to make sure accounting records were maintained. He was also ordered to pay costs of £15,000.

Managing partner suspended for instructing solicitor to lie

A solicitor, who had only been admitted three weeks earlier, was instructed to send a misleading email to a client by her supervisor, the managing partner. She

refused, the email was not sent, and the underlying transaction was not affected. While the SDT found the partner had acted dishonestly, it imposed a 9 month suspension, taking into account exceptional circumstances, the fact the solicitor showed remorse and that in the three years it took the matter to reach the SDT, the solicitor was issued practising certificates free from conditions. He was ordered to pay £14000 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

PROFESSOR ELIZABETH J. SOILLEUX
MA, MB, BChir, PhD, FRCPath
CONSULTANT PATHOLOGIST

Experienced Cambridge and Oxford-trained consultant pathologist with particular interests in haematopathology (lymphomas, leukaemias), cardiovascular pathology & autopsy pathology.

Expert Witness Certificate (Civil Law),
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- Biopsy Pathology (esp Lymphoma & Leukaemia)
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Mr Alan Jervis BA (Hons) FCII MAE

CHARTERED INSURANCE PRACTITIONER and MARINE, ENERGY & LIABILITY INSURANCE EXPERT



Mr Alan Jervis is an accredited and experienced Insurance Expert Witness. He is also an accredited Expert Determiner specialising in the insurance sector and trade disputes.

Alan is a seasoned insurance practitioner with over 46 years of experience. He is an accredited auditor and peer reviewer in the London, Continental and North American insurance markets. He teaches insurance courses and participates in educational initiatives. Alan continuously updates his knowledge through professional development courses. He is a member of several professional organizations, including the Academy of Experts and the Chartered Insurance Institute. He is also a vetted member of the UK Register of Experts.

Alan has been retained as an insurance expert in over 45 cases, specialising in the following areas of underwriting, claims handling and adjusting practices and insurance archaeology:

- Marine Cargo • Marine Hull • Protection and Indemnity
- Yacht and Pleasurecraft • Energy • Aviation • Public Liability
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Charity Spotlight:

Liverpool Charity and Voluntary Services



Background

Nestled in the heart of the Liverpool City Centre, Liverpool Charity and Voluntary Services (LCVS) works to improve the lives of individuals and communities across Liverpool. For over 114 years, the charity has served as an umbrella organisation for Liverpool's third sector, otherwise known as the voluntary or VCFSE (voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise) sector. Through their advocacy, services, grants, networking and research, LCVS aims to support individuals and voluntary sector organisations to thrive. They also help donors distribute over £4 million every year to charitable organisations, both here in the UK and across the world, who share their values.

History

In 1909, the Lord Mayor of Liverpool, **H Chaloner Dowdall**, called a meeting with

Liverpool's vast network of charities to discuss creating a body that would help charities cooperate with one another and with public authorities. **Fredric D'Aeth**, a lecturer at the University of Liverpool, carried out a comprehensive study of Liverpool's charities, which convinced the charities that a coordinating body was needed.

Soon, interested parties drafted a constitution, which was adopted on 5 November 1909 and Liverpool Council of Voluntary Aid was born. Liverpool became the first city in the country to establish its voluntary aid council. Over the years that have followed, the organisation has developed and changed its name several times. Since 2005, they have been known as Liverpool Charity and Voluntary Services (LCVS).

Mission

LCVS believes that everyone deserves opportunities to have a good life: a quality education that leads to a stable job, enough income to support a family through retirement, and good health.

That's why they want all of their work to be underpinned by the following four key pillars for a good life and improved well-being; all aim to address the poverty of:

- **Education** - helping children and young people achieve their potential
- **Income** - reducing inequality and supporting financial stability and independence, and initiatives which tackle or reduce poverty
- **Health** - improving people's health
- **Arts & Culture** - promoting the benefits of arts and cultural activities in terms of health, education and community cohesion.

Advocacy for the Sector

LCVS has a seat on several strategic groups and boards to advocate for the VCFSE sector organisations, to ensure that the opinions and concerns of those involved are heard. These include:

- Health and Wellbeing Board
- One Liverpool Partnership Board
- Liverpool Strategic Partnership
- Cheshire & Mersey Health Leads Forum
- Violence Reduction Partnership
- Merseyside Funders Forum.

Here's what **Hannah Lewis**, the former Partnerships Manager at Thrive had to say about LCVS and what they offer:

"Connect with LCVS... They are a connected team who champion opportunity for smaller organisations across the region – it's definitely worth connecting with them!"

Services for the Sector

LCVS provides a myriad of services to local third sector organisations, it includes but is not limited to:

- **Capacity Building:** Organisations can get support in areas such as governance, income generation, partnership development, planning/ impact measurement and more
- **Community Accountancy and Payroll:** Reliable, cost-effective financial support and management for non-profits



- **Training:** Courses cover subject areas such as start-ups, fundraising, governance, planning, volunteering, and more
- **Charity Services** - LCVS acts as trustee, treasurer and secretary for various private trusts and foundations and manages investments of £20 million on behalf of them
- **Hub for the Sector:** LCVS owns and manages 151 Dale Street (otherwise known as the Third Sector Resource Centre), it is home to LCVS and influential organisations such as the Anthony Walker Foundation, Sahir House and more. It offers VCFSE organisations accommodation at less than commercial rent.

Grants for the Sector

To support those in our communities who are most in need, LCVS distributes grant funding throughout the year.

Examples include:

- **LCVS Community Impact Fund:** In 2022, LCVS distributed 229 grants valued at £413,765 to 180 organisations, providing critical assistance to grassroots initiatives.
- **Skelton Charity:** In 2022, LCVS distributed 69 grants to good causes via Skelton Charity, totalling £999,999.

LCVS also manages numerous key programmes of funding for the voluntary sector, this includes but is not limited to - UKSPF Digital Inclusion Fund, Healthy Weight Programme, and more.

Here's what Natalie Reeves Billing, one of the founders of Builder Book UK had to say about receiving funding from LCVS: *"It was absolutely essential. It came in right at the beginning of our fundraising activities and helped us to get the ball rolling, which is always the hardest part."*

The funding from LCVS was used to help print 10,000 eco-friendly STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Maths) creativity packs for children and their families.

Networks & Research for the Sector Providing networking opportunities and bringing people together to address problems are among the activities that are vital to the aims of LCVS. Due to this, they are organisers/ part of many networks and groups, it includes but is not limited to:

- **Health & Wellbeing Organisations Network (H&WON):** With over 220 members, the H&WON brings together local organisations to network, share information and more
- **CoREN (Community Research and Engagement Network):** This

network seeks to encourage and support the linking of academia to community organisations. LCVS provides insight on the third sector.

- **Poverty Action Group:** This group brings together the voluntary sector, housing partners and city council to work together to address issues arising from poverty in the city
- **VS6:** This is a partnership of support organisations working with the 11500 VCFSE groups operating across the Liverpool City Region.

How you can support LCVS

For over a century, LCVS has been playing a vital role in supporting Liverpool's voluntary sector, however, while the cost of living is challenging for everyone, it has put the voluntary sector under extreme pressure, financial support is essential for LCVS to continue its mission. With your help, LCVS can continue to bring people, organisations and resources from across Liverpool to work together, for Liverpool, for Good.

You can donate to LCVS by visiting tinyurl.com/LCVSDonate

You can keep up to date with LCVS by visiting their website at www.lcvs.org.uk or by following them on social media via hopp.bio/liverpoolcvs



Comparing Legal Case Management and Practice Management Software: Understanding the Distinctions

The difference between **Legal Case Management Software** and **Legal Practice Management Software** is sometimes a cause of confusion for legal firms worldwide. This lack of clarity can lead to poor investment decisions, since solicitors may believe a platform offers more functionalities than it actually does. Clarity is essential when entrusting your company's operations to software.

How Do Legal Practice Management Software and Legal Case Management Software Differ From One Another?

Although terms like “practice management” and “case management” may appear similar, they actually connect to different feature sets intended to meet specific demands inside a legal firm. We will go over each one in detail below.

Legal Practice Management Software

Let's begin by explaining what exactly practice management software does. Practice management software usually requires a more comprehensive approach. It tackles all aspects of legal practice as a business, focussing on assisting the firm's broader internal procedures, workflows, and duties. Features include managing client relationships, task management, financial operations, document management, and scheduling, among others.

Legal Case Management Software

So, what exactly is legal case management software? In the context of UK law, the term “case” often refers to a legal proceeding that might be either civil or criminal in character. It is a way of resolving conflicts or administering justice, and it can be referred to by several titles, such as action, suit, or controversy, depending on where it

occurs and the nature of the issue.

Legal case management software is meant to assist lawyers in keeping track of everything relevant to a single case. This type of software organises every aspect of a case, from essential witnesses to important pieces of evidence and legal deadlines, to enable lawyers to better defend their clients in court.

Combined Management Systems

Each type of software has a unique naming convention that reflects its fundamental functions. The term “case management” refers to the management of single legal cases, whereas “practice management” refers to the overall operation of a law firm.

While legal case management and practice management software serve particular functions, some advanced systems successfully combine the two sets of features. Take Denovo as an example. It is an all-in-one platform that supports lawyers in managing the complicated nature of individual cases as well as maintaining a legal firm's business. In doing so, Denovo crosses the conventional borders between “case management” and “practice management,” providing complete software that can adapt to a legal firm's various needs. This type of dual functionality can be especially beneficial for businesses looking for a streamlined, consolidated solution for managing cases and controlling their operations through a legal case management system.

Essential Features

Software with a focus on litigation support is necessary if managing individual legal cases is your main priority. This includes the ability to organise matters, review records, and keep track of legal issues unique to each case. If you're more concerned

with the business aspect of your firm, you'll want to look for software that includes administrative features like time recording, billing, and client communication. Some software solutions, such as Denovo's Caseload platform, combine the two, providing an integrated approach that provides complete matter management by allowing you to manage cases and firm operations simultaneously.

Easy to use

Regardless of the type of software you use, ease of use is essential. If the software is hard to use, you risk complicating your daily tasks, which contradicts the goal of using technology to automate and enhance your productivity. So, whether it's case management or practice management software, make sure it has an easy user interface that meets the unique requirements of legal professionals.

Options for Customisation

The ability to customise a case management system to meet your law firm's specific needs might be a significant advantage for enhancing productivity. Whether you want to modify case forms, billing systems, or client contact elements, the software should be flexible enough to meet your case-related needs. It's important to note that more complete management systems typically provide a broader range of customisation choices, allowing you to successfully handle cases and practice operations.

Seamless Integration

Another important aspect is how well the software [integrates with other applications](#) you currently use in your law practice. This is essential to optimising your processes and increasing efficiency.

Continues on page 48

Frustrated Lawyers are switching to Denovo...

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Comparing Legal Case Management and Practice Management Software continued...

Maybe you need it for integration with your current email platform or to connect with your case management system and [AML platform](#). Regardless, seamless integration capabilities can help you improve your work processes, whether you're working on individual cases or larger practice management projects.

Denovo is the ultimate legal software solution

Lawyers understand that terminology may be complex, providing weight to terms that might fail to convey the full extent of the situation. The difference between "legal case management" and "legal practice management" may appear to be important

in the area of legal software, but Denovo demonstrates that these terms are not needed. Our all-in-one cloud-based platform offers a comprehensive legal technology solution that covers both categories, allowing you to easily manage individual cases, and all practice areas, while also overseeing broader practice operations.

If you would like to speak to us about our whole practice management software solution you can arrange a consultation [here](#). If you would prefer to call us you can reach us on 0141 331 5290.

Meeting of experts – solicitors get it wrong again!



Chris Makin

My loyal readers will know that I often bang on about incompetent experts. There is a treasure-trove of articles on the shocking failure of some experts, in my blog <https://chrismakin.co.uk/blog/>. But we should also be alert to the blame which should attach to solicitors who get it wrong. Most expert witnesses are not full-time experts; indeed, many believe that a witness cannot have current expertise sufficient to give expert evidence if he is not active in his main profession. And I have spoken before about the need for those who wish to give expert evidence to learn how to do it properly. For an accountant, expert witness work is not merely a sexy infill between audits.

But for litigation solicitors there is no excuse. Their main profession is litigation, and they must know the rules and, of course, make sure that those they instruct as experts follow them, too.

I wrote recently about the case of *Patricia Andrews & Ors -v- Kronospan Ltd* [2022] EWHC 479 where an expert delivered a joint statement of experts to the court more than two years late. It emerged that he had conferred with his instructing solicitor *some 69 times* for help on drafting his joint statement. He should have known better. The judge decided that the expert had no regard for their independence. The report was withdrawn and the judge allowed another expert to be appointed. But the first expert had charged £225,000 which was wasted, and there would no doubt be a costs order against that party, too.

But what about the solicitor in all this? The expert should have known better than to turn repeatedly to the solicitor for help, but the solicitor should have known – *must* have known – that he should not reply when the expert asked. Who paid the £225,000 plus any costs order I don't know, but from what is reported it surely shouldn't have been the client. Now it's happened again.

Glover -v- Fluid Structural Engineers & Technical Designers Ltd [2024] EWHC 1257 (TCC) was a case about damage to adjoining property, and it required expert engineers to find out what had happened, and assist the court to decide whose fault it was. The defendant became suspicious when the claimant's expert appeared to have changed his opinions as the joint statement was being compiled. A series of questions were posed of the claimant solicitor, who gave assurances that nothing untoward had happened.

Then, when the claimant solicitor was asked whether any instructions had been given regarding the substance and the wording of the draft statement and whether the expert had been

asked to change his opinion, there was no reply. This was highly suspicious.

The TCC Guide is quite specific about what help a solicitor may give to their expert in joint reports. Here is the relevant wording from paragraph 13.6.3:

Whilst the parties' legal advisors may assist in identifying issues which the statement should address, those legal advisors must not be involved in either negotiating or drafting the experts' joint statement. Legal advisors should only invite the experts to consider amending any draft joint statement in exceptional circumstances where there are serious concerns that the court may misunderstand or be misled by the terms of that joint statement. Any such concerns should be raised with all experts involved in the joint statement.

This could not be plainer. The lawyer must not be involved in drafting or negotiating the experts' joint statement. Only in exceptional circumstances where the court may misunderstand or be misled by the statement should they intervene, and even then, they must communicate with all the experts. Cosy chats between one lawyer and their expert is verboten!

So what happened? The claimant lawyer apologised to the defendant and to the court, accepted that permission to rely on their expert's opinion be revoked, and asked permission for a new expert to be appointed. The judge allowed for a new expert, but only if the original trial date could be met.

But here's the rub. The judge awarded costs thrown away on an indemnity basis and 30% of the costs of considering the new expert's report and the joint report, again on an indemnity basis if not agreed. That would hurt.

There really cannot be any excuse if litigation lawyers don't know the rules, or don't follow them. The expert should never have asked for assistance in drafting the joint statement but, *a fortiori*, the lawyer should not have given that assistance. And, in line with my repeated entreaties, the lawyer should have chosen an expert who knew the rules and followed them.

Age old moral: choose your experts with care.

Chris Makin

Biog: Chris Makin has practised as a forensic accountant and expert witness for 30 years, latterly as Head of Litigation Support at a national firm. He has given expert evidence about 100 times. He also performs expert determinations.

Chris is a fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants where he has served on the Forensic Committee, and as an ethical counsellor; he is a fellow of the Chartered Management Institute, a fellow of the Academy of Experts where he serves on the Investigations Committee, and a mediator accredited by the Chartered Arbitrators. He practises as a mediator, from his home in West Yorkshire and his rooms at 3 Gray's Inn Square, London WC1R 5AH, telephone 020 7430 0333. He has mediated 100+ cases so far, on a huge range of subjects, with a settlement rate to date of 80%. For more see his website, with videos:

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Chris Makin

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Are you a procrastinator?



Many of us will be familiar with **procrastinating - putting off or avoiding a task that needs to be done. If often seems as if the more we have to do, the more we procrastinate. There are two types of procrastination, active and passive.**

Active procrastinators work better under pressure, they may choose to leave a task until it's right down to the wire because they thrive on adrenaline.

Passive procrastinators do so to the detriment of their performance. According to a [2013 study](#) procrastination has nothing to do with poor time management or laziness, it occurs because of our inability to manage negative emotion surrounding a task, either focused on an aversion to the task itself or because of the feelings the task provokes 'I can't write this, I don't

know enough about it, my boss will criticise me.' These thoughts then make us procrastinate further.

Procrastination is closely linked to perfectionism, low self-esteem, fear of failure or of moving forward in our lives. Often procrastination is a red flag that we are finding it hard to cope, it can be a symptom of an underlying issue such as stress, anxiety or depression.

So, if you are a procrastinator what can you do? Here are some tips.

Practice self-compassion

Be kind to yourself, and don't beat yourself up for procrastinating. Just accept that you do it. Try and write down some positive things about yourself, perhaps something nice a colleague said to you, or think about a previous time you completed a similar task and it went ok.

Make a list

Start by making a list of everything you have to do. Break big tasks into smaller manageable chunks so they don't feel overwhelming and set realistic deadlines for each task.

Block out time and remove distractions Estimate how long certain tasks will take and block out time in your calendar to complete them. Work out what times of day suit you to complete certain tasks, for example if you're a morning person you might be better at drafting a document first thing and want to save admin tasks for the afternoon. If possible, turn off your phone and email notifications during these times so you don't get distracted. You can also block your access to social media on your phone during certain times of day.

Make a start

It's easy to say just do it – but sometimes exactly what you need to do is just make a start on something. It doesn't have to be perfect.

Build in rewards

It's important to build in rest time or reward yourself for meeting deadlines. Perhaps make a deal with yourself that you'll get a coffee after you've completed a certain task, or you'll go for a walk after clearing your inbox. Short breaks and time away from your desk improve your energy and focus.

Seek help

If your procrastination is starting to become unmanageable call LawCare for support on 0800 279 6888, email: support@lawcare.org.uk or visit www.lawcare.org.uk. LawCare offer free, independent and confidential support to people working in the legal sector. All calls, chats and emails are responded to by trained staff and volunteers who have first-hand experience of working in law.



Wongs Jewellers sparkles as Merseyside Independent Business of the Year 2024



WONGS shone as the overall winner of the Merseyside Independent Business (MIB) Awards.

The family-run Liverpool jeweller took the crown at the event which saw 500 people gather at The Titanic Hotel.

Across 13 categories, winners also

included Hope Street Hotel, Tech business MyCardium AI and mental health organisation Evolving Mindset.

The Merseyside Independent Business Awards were founded in 2013 by Morecrofts Solicitors to recognise and celebrate other independents across the city region.

Alison Lobb, Managing Partner at Morecrofts Solicitors, said: *“Independent businesses are the backbone of Merseyside’s economy, and it’s incredibly important to recognise the resilience and innovation these businesses bring to our region. We are thrilled to celebrate their successes, and it is incredible to see the strong community spirit which unites these diverse enterprises.”*

The headline sponsor of the MIB Awards is The Liverpool BID Company. Announcing Wongs as the winner, Director of Strategic Partnerships and Communications, **Katie Bentley**, said:

“Judges said this business encapsulated everything on the checklist for an amazing independent.”

“Their entry demonstrated excellent client care, approachability, engaging marketing campaigns and commitment to investment in the city region.”

“Judges noted that the business in question has built a recognisable brand, while remaining local and offering its clients exceptional service.”



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Summary of Hair Strand Testing and Its Implications in the Family Justice System

Introduction

In this article, we summarise a follow-up paper written by **Sarah Branson** which was published in Family Law June 2023. Sarah Branson is a barrister at Coram Chambers, specialising in acting for children, parents, and local authorities in the most complex public law proceedings.

Hair strand testing (HST) has long been a pivotal tool in the family justice system, utilised to detect drug and alcohol consumption in individuals. This method is often employed to make critical decisions about child custody and welfare, aiming to ensure that children are in safe and stable environments. However, recent research and case law have raised significant concerns about the accuracy and fairness of HST practices, particularly regarding the use of cut-off levels and their inherent racial bias.

Understanding Hair Strand Testing

HST is utilised to detect drug and alcohol consumption by analysing hair samples. However, the methodology currently applied in HST, specifically the use of cut-off levels, has shown significant racial bias and potential inaccuracies.

Racial Bias in Hair Strand Testing

Research reveals that drugs like cocaine and heroin bind more readily to dark melanin in hair. Consequently, individuals with black hair could have amounts of these drugs present in their hair at far higher levels compared to those with lighter hair, despite having the same level of drug use.

Problems with Cut-Off Levels

Cut-off levels were established decades ago to differentiate drug use from environmental contamination. These levels are a blunt tool that fail to account for several variables such as hair colour, ethnicity, hair treatments, and hygiene. The application of cut-off levels can result in misleading conclusions, such as false positives and false negatives, leading to the misreporting of findings and therefore incorrect decisions being made around children and families.

Laboratory Variability

There is considerable variation in results between different laboratories due to differing methodologies and how samples are processed at each stage. This inconsistency, when reported using laboratory cut-off levels, can lead to contradictory outcomes from the same hair sample. The only solution is for all laboratories to report all findings and stop using cut-off levels.

Impact of Hair Treatments

Permanent dyes and bleaching can significantly lower the amount of drug detectable in hair, often leading to false negatives. Conversely, stopping the use of these treatments can cause a spike in detected drug levels, falsely indicating resumed drug use.

Guidance from Case Law

Recent rulings, like the Court of Appeal decision in *Re D (Children Interim Care Order Hair Strand Testing)* [2024], underscore the necessity of treating HST results with caution. The courts require experts to provide detailed explanations of their findings, considering all influencing factors and not merely relying on cut-off levels. The experts need to “*fully and faithfully explain their findings*”.

In respect of best practice for drug testing experts, the principles were originally set out by **Peter Jackson J** (as he then was) in *Re H (A Child: Hair Strand Testing)* [2017] EWFC 64 [2017]: “*It would be artificial to require valid data to be struck from the record because it falls below a cut-off level when it may be significant in the context of other findings.*”

Recommendations for Improvement

- Expert Evidence:** The family courts need to move away from thinking of drug testing as simply a “test” and start to consider it as expert evidence.
- Avoid Binary Results:** Drug testing should not label results simply as “positive” or “negative.” Instead, it

should provide a nuanced analysis of all findings.

- Expert Interpretation:** Experts should interpret and explain HST results within the context of a comprehensive forensic history, considering factors such as hair treatments, environmental exposure, and individual hair characteristics.
- Report all findings:** There are variables inherent in the testing process that must therefore be factored into the interpretation of the results. The experts must present the details in a clear, accurate and unambiguous way in their reports.
- Proper Classification use:** The classification in reports of “high, medium or low” should not be read to correspond with “high, medium or low” use.
- Broader picture:** No hair strand testing should be regarded as determinative or conclusive. It must be placed within the broader picture which includes social work evidence, medical reports, the evaluation of the donor’s reliability in her account.
- Updated Practices:** Testing laboratories must stay abreast of the latest research and methodologies to provide accurate and non-discriminatory results.
- Use of Alternative Samples:** In cases where head hair might be compromised, samples from nails or body hair should be used to provide a fuller picture.

Conclusion

Hair strand testing, if not properly conducted and interpreted, poses significant risks of injustice, particularly in family court settings. It is crucial to move towards a more informed, equitable approach that considers all relevant factors and reduces reliance on outdated cut-off levels.

You can read the full published article here: <https://www.forensic-testing.co.uk/news/sarah-branson-barrister/hair-strand-testing-family-law/>



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For full details or to book any of the above courses (& more!) please visit:
<https://www.liverpoollawsociety.org.uk/training/>



Liverpool Law Society

Domestic Abuse Law - Developments & Updates

with Safda Mahmood

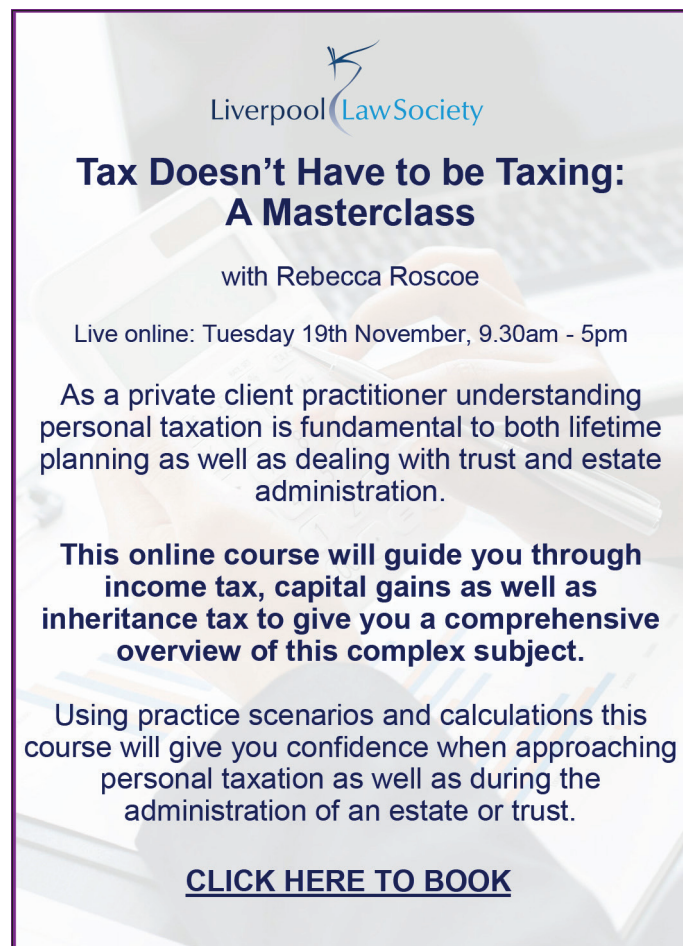
Live online Wednesday 13th November, 10am - 4pm

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

The topics covered will include:

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

[Book here](#)



Liverpool Law Society

Tax Doesn't Have to be Taxing: A Masterclass

with Rebecca Roscoe

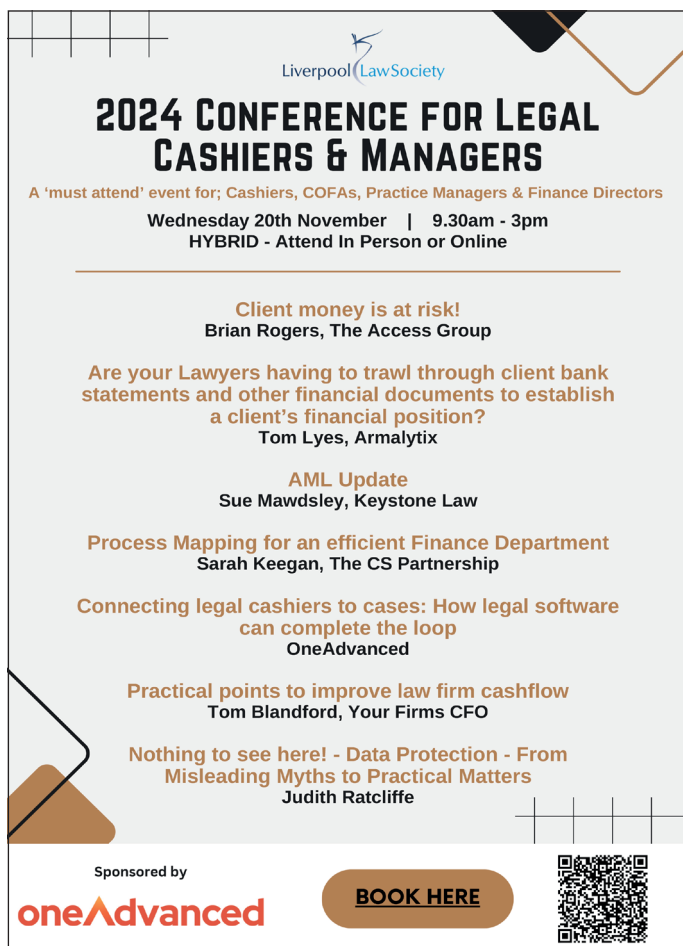
Live online: Tuesday 19th November, 9.30am - 5pm

As a private client practitioner understanding personal taxation is fundamental to both lifetime planning as well as dealing with trust and estate administration.

This online course will guide you through income tax, capital gains as well as inheritance tax to give you a comprehensive overview of this complex subject.

Using practice scenarios and calculations this course will give you confidence when approaching personal taxation as well as during the administration of an estate or trust.

[CLICK HERE TO BOOK](#)



Liverpool Law Society

2024 CONFERENCE FOR LEGAL CASHIERS & MANAGERS

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

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

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

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

AML Update
Sue Mawdsley, Keystone Law

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


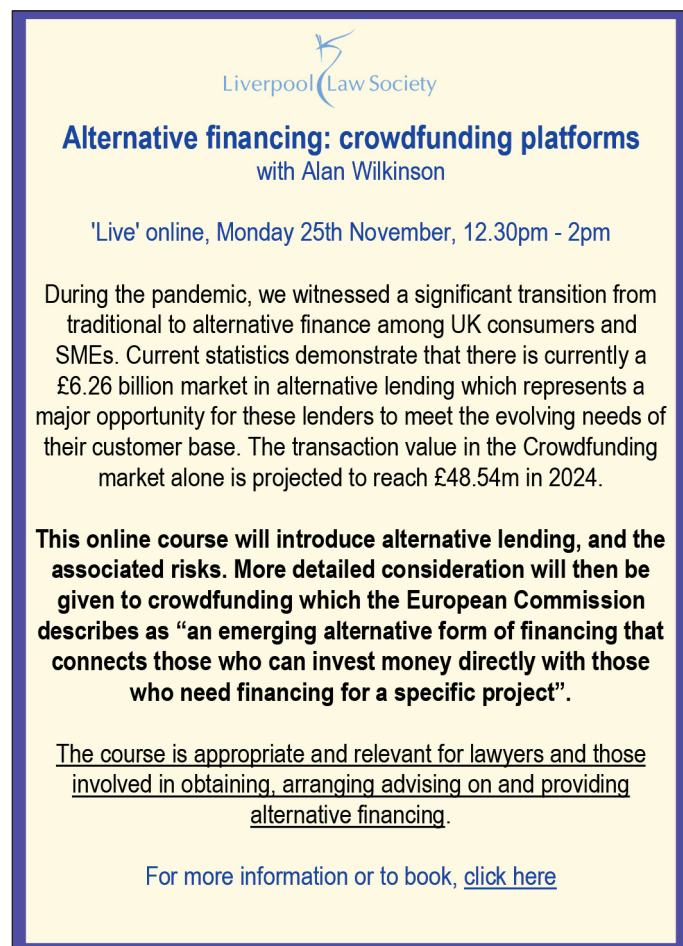
Connecting legal cashiers to cases: How legal software can complete the loop
OneAdvanced

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

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

Sponsored by **oneAdvanced**

[BOOK HERE](#)

Liverpool Law Society

Alternative financing: crowdfunding platforms

with Alan Wilkinson

'Live' online, Monday 25th November, 12.30pm - 2pm

During the pandemic, we witnessed a significant transition from traditional to alternative finance among UK consumers and SMEs. Current statistics demonstrate that there is currently a £6.26 billion market in alternative lending which represents a major opportunity for these lenders to meet the evolving needs of their customer base. The transaction value in the Crowdfunding market alone is projected to reach £48.54m in 2024.

This online course will introduce alternative lending, and the associated risks. More detailed consideration will then be given to crowdfunding which the European Commission describes as "an emerging alternative form of financing that connects those who can invest money directly with those who need financing for a specific project".

The course is appropriate and relevant for lawyers and those involved in obtaining, arranging advising on and providing alternative financing.

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



Conducting Effective Advocacy in Family & Children Cases

with Safda Mahmood

Tuesday 26th November, 10am - 4pm

This online course will be of assistance to those lawyers acting for parents, children, extended family members and local authorities.

The topics covered will include amongst others, the following:

- Understand good advocacy skills
- Become more confident
- Effective preparation
- Advocacy at Family Law Act applications for non – molestation orders and occupation orders.
- Advocacy in Private and Public Children Law Cases
- Calling ‘Live’ Evidence
- Making good opening and closing speeches/submissions.



[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFO](#)



Property Development: Practical Problems

with Hannah Mackinlay

Live online: 27th November, 9.15am - 12.30pm

For those who do Commercial Property work.

What are the main issues that come up every time on developments, especially site assemblies.

Trainer Hannah Mackinlay will look at the main ones & how to spot them.

Covering:

- Client Reports & Communication Silos – are they just ‘backside covering’ or do they convey useful information for clients and their professional team
- Jigsaw disasters – comparing the real world with what people think is there, planning permissions and assumptions, points on boundaries, easements, the limitations of LR plans
- Highway robbery. Highway law issues on developments – splays and adoption problems
- Easements and services – can you service the development?
- The lie of ‘Clear’ Environmental search results
- ‘Just get some title insurance’, that will solve it. But will it? Your new obligations under the Directive

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFO](#)



2024 Personal Injury Conference

Wednesday 4th December | 9.30am – 3.30pm
HYBRID – Attend in person or online

Chairperson – **HHJ Gregory**

Catastrophic Injury Update – a view from the coalface
Matthew Stockwell, Exchange Chambers

Costs Budgeting – Opportunities and Pitfalls
Dominic Woodhouse, PIC Legal

Fixed Costs Wars: Part 45 Strikes Back
John Meehan, Kings Chambers

How not to get sued – conducting personal injury claims from a professional negligence perspective
Colm Nugent, Gatehouse Law Chambers

IFB Update
Jon Radford, Insurance Fraud Bureau

Surveillance Evidence; law, practice & procedure
Ian Huffer & Elahe Youshani, 18 St John Street Chambers

Litigating claims for Functional Neurological Disorder
Louis Browne KC, Exchange Chambers

Accredited by APIL Training. Level: Litigator & Snr Litigator CPD hours: 4.75



BOOK HERE



Key Issues In Relation to Easements

with Richard Snape

'Live' online, 11th December, 1.30pm - 4.30pm

Easements continue to give rise to much litigation & present many traps for the unwary conveyancer. This online course aims to point out some of the pitfalls & how to avoid them.

Topics covered include:

- Characteristics of an easement
- Rights of light
- Car parking rights
- Drainage rights
- Adding to the dominant land
- Vehicle access problems
- Implied Easements
- Prescriptive Easements
- Easements and Wayleaves
- Intensification of Use
- Extinguishing Easements



[BOOK HERE](#)

Liverpool Law Society

AI & THE PROVISION OF LEGAL SERVICES

Wednesday 6th November | 12 - 2.30pm | Face-to-Face
Liverpool John Moores University, Student Life Building,
10 Copperas Hill, Liverpool, L3 5AH

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

Chairperson – Henry Sturm, Legal Geek

What is AI
Edmund Chan, Hill Dickinson

How it's already being used within the law
Catherine Bamford, BamLegal

Benefits of adopting for your firm
Brian Noon, In-House Legal Solutions

Data & Regulatory issues
Josh Bates, O'Connors

Preparing future lawyers
Dr. Alison Lui, LJMU

Panel discussion & questions
chaired by Henry Sturm

Refreshments, networking & live demonstrations from the sponsors/exhibitors

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Liverpool Law Society

NEW Understanding the new law relating to harassment of a sexual nature

with Professor Kathy Daniels

‘Live’ online Friday, 29 November 2024, 1.30pm - 3pm

On 26 October 2024 new legislation came into force requiring employers to take reasonable steps to stop harassment of a sexual nature occurring in the workplace. This is an 'anticipatory' duty - it means that employers have got to think ahead, and identify how harassment might occur and then take action to stop it. It requires a 'risk assessment' type approach.

In this session we will start by understanding the law relating to harassment in the Equality Act 2010, and then we will look at the new legislation and what additional requirements this places on the employer. We will look at case law relating to harassment of a sexual nature, to gain some insights into issues that have previously arisen. We will think about what practical steps an employer needs to take to address potential issues. Finally, we will take a look ahead at the Employment Rights Bill and think about what changes there are to come to this area of law.

This session will be useful for all those advising employers on employment related matters, as well as HR professionals who are likely to be putting the law into practice in their organisations.

[BOOK HERE](#)

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

ENQUIRE

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.

AL Acuity Law @AcuityLaw · 18 Oct

It was a pleasure to attend the University of Law Bristol Law Fair on Wednesday! Thanks to everyone who came by our stand to say hello.

Our next stop will be the Cardiff University Law Fair on Wednesday 30th October. We look forward to meeting you there!

dc Dutton Gregory @DuttonGregory · 11 Oct

Congratulations to our intrepid cyclists who rode 580 miles across France to complete the 'Brittany Challenge' in aid of Challenge Adventure Charities.

Well done chaps! 🎉 🍷 🙌

GAD Legal @GAD_Legal · 18 Oct 2021

Delighted our Commercial Team advised the parties on this Joint Venture. An exciting opportunity for both clubs & all involved.

#commerciallaw #sportbusiness #sportslaw #gadcommercial #gadlegal @GorillaSportsGB #MBFCMAFC #dealcompleted #soccer

Maryland Bobcats FC @MDBobcatsFC · 16 Oct 2021

MBFC announce partnership with Merseyside, UK-based club @MarineAFC

Full Release: marylandbobcatsfc.com/news/2021/10/1...

Show more

PARTNERSHIP ANNOUNCEMENT

Jackson Lees @JacksonLeesLaw · 16 Oct

Today Phoebe Pratt and Ella Roberts are at the University of Liverpool Careers Fair representing Jackson Lees Group and Broudie Jackson Center. They are on hand to answer questions about routes into law.

For more information, please go to: ow.ly/yguM50TLFWq

Fletchers Solicitors @Fletchers.Group · 13 Oct

We had a great day @classibikeshow Stafford chatting to people about road safety and the work we do. Good to see our friends @UpRightDerbys and @DocBikeStaffs as usual. If you are coming today come over for a chat we are in hall 2. 🍷

Maxwell Hodge Solicitors @maxwell.hodge · 18 Oct

We were delighted to be a part of the Split Perspective CIC T/A The Builder Book UK Project Awards evening on Wednesday, held at the Shakespeare North. It was an amazing event organised by the fabulous Natalie Reeves Billing DL FRSA & Jude Lennon. Well done!

#PlanetPack

D Donoghue Solicitors @donoghuelaw · 11 Oct

In this new blog post, Kevin Donoghue explains what he learned when his client Edwin Afriyie's #police claim was heard at the Court of Appeal this week.

Kevin, Richard Clayton KC, and @DghSpanishWelsh represented Mr Afriyie at the Royal Courts of #Justice.

bit.ly/4eFMGLt

ClwydAlyn @ClwydAlyn · 22 Oct

Maes y Dderwen's @macmillancancer Coffee Morning raised £300! 🍷

The morning involved guessing the weight of the cake 10lb 3oz cake, and the winning resident donated the cake back, which was won by one of the care team. Thank you to everyone who got involved and donated 🍷

Paul Crowley & Co @PaulCrowleyCo · 17 Jul

Wishing Coco'nCrunch a very Happy 7th Birthday from everyone at Paul Crowley & Co Solicitors 🍰 Cakes for all the team 🍷

#paulcrowleysolicitors #paulcrowleyandcosolicitors #paulcrowleyandco #happybirthday #7today #7thbirthday

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

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A woman with long brown hair and glasses is smiling while talking on a mobile phone. She is holding a white coffee cup with a red pattern. The background is a blurred outdoor setting.

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