

The President of The Law Society update 13 May 2019

As the professional body for solicitors, every week the Law Society is working hard to influence the legal and regulatory environment on behalf of our profession and to promote solicitors at home and abroad. We support practice excellence, are an informed source of legal sector news and support members at every stage of their career.

Here are some highlights from this week.

Influencing on behalf of the profession and promoting the profession

The Law Society's media profile this week:

The [Times](#) (£) reported IT glitches are causing delays in applications for grants of probate. I said: "It seems inherently unfair that the impact of this falls on the bereaved when they have no other option but to apply for probate." I also wrote a letter to the [Telegraph](#) on how delays were affecting the bereaved.

Richard Atkinson, co-chair of the criminal law committee, appeared on *Talk Radio* to discuss what constitutes a proportional use of force in burglary cases. You can listen to the broadcast [here](#). Richard's interview ran in the 10:00 – 10:30 slot – he's on from 20:25.

The [New Law Journal](#) and [Bucks Herald](#) covers I. Stephanie Boyce's election as Law Society deputy vice-president. She will become vice-president in 2020 and president in July 2021. Stephanie said: "It will be my honour to lead our independent, strong and diverse legal profession." Also reported in St Vincent's [Searchlight](#) and by [News784.com](#).

The [Telegraph](#) reports on staff anxiety in city firms. A recent survey by the Law Society showed that half of respondents have experienced mental health issues in the past month.

The [Solicitors Journal](#) covers a Legal Services Board (LSB) decision not to ban professional bodies from influencing the Solicitors Regulation Authority. I commented "we're pleased the LSB appears to have taken our views on board".

In a comment for the [Gazette](#), Law Society council member Laura Uberoi writes on why steering away from after-work drinks is important for achieving gender equality and diversity in the profession.

A customs union with the EU will do little to help the legal sector, writes Law Society vice president Simon Davis in the [Times](#) (£) – noting access for services will require an additional agreement.

The [Gazette](#) reports from our event on the ethical boundaries of non-disclosure agreements. "Solicitors have a responsibility to stay on the right side of ethics when drafting confidentiality clauses," said Harvey Weinstein whistleblower, Zelda Perkins. Max Winthrop, chair of the employment law committee, argued it's right for solicitors to consider their responsibilities, "to their client, but also to the public interest." See our press release [here](#).

Cris McCurley, a member of our access to justice committee, spoke to [Radio 5 Live](#) (1:20:00) and *BBC West Midlands* about the online abuse threats against Labour MP Jess Phillips and the law on online harassment.

Don't forget you can read all Law Society press releases by clicking on this [link](#). For live updates follow us on [Twitter](#).

Consultation responses and parliamentary activity, influencing on behalf of the profession:

Regulation

Marzena Lipman - interim head of regulatory affairs - and Sarah Brodie – policy adviser - facilitated a session on regulatory changes at the Law Management Section annual conference on 2nd May.

The Legal Services Board have announced a further six week consultation on IGRS beginning 2nd May. They are considering amending Rule 1 to replace the term influence with prejudice which more closely reflects the terminology of Section 30 of the Legal Services Act.

AML policy staff and members of the Money Laundering Task Force are meeting HM Treasury on 3rd May to discuss legal sector views on the draft public-private plan for tackling economic crime. The government expects the plan to be published in July.

AML policy staff and members of the Task Force met with the National Crime Agency and the SRA to work on new template scenarios that will assist solicitors submitting a suspicious activity report. The work is expected to be completed by late June.

Access to Justice

On 25th April we re-launched our Advice Deserts campaign with a new housing map showing the shortage of housing practitioners across the country. It received good coverage on television and radio. Further information on the campaign is available on the [webpage](#).

LASPO

I attended the first meeting of the Legal Support Advisory Board organised by the Ministry of Justice to oversee much of the work arising from the LASPO Post Implementation Review.

Court reform

As part of the HMCTS court reform programme, a new Bill was introduced into the House of Lords. The Courts and Tribunals (Online Procedure) Bill will establish a judicially chaired committee tasked with developing new, simplified rules around online services in civil, family and tribunal proceedings. The Bill will now proceed to its Second Reading, which is expected to take place on the 14 May.

Members of the justice team met a delegation from Singapore to talk about reform to our civil courts.

Solicitor Judges and Advocacy

As the Spring legal term draws to a close, the Law Society's Solicitor Judges Division and Advocacy Support will be hosting a Spring drinks evening with solicitor advocates and solicitor judges on 14th May.

Vice president Simon Davis and Alexandra Marks CBE will speak at this celebratory networking drinks evening, aimed at solicitors working in the courts, solicitor judges and those aspiring to join the judiciary and offering an opportunity to network with peers, make career contacts and discuss anecdotes and approaches to cases over a drink and canapes.

Any members wishing to attend can book through our [events](#) page.

Criminal Law

As part of our ongoing criminal justice campaign, we have launched a petition calling for the government to increase investment in the criminal justice system. To add your digital signature to the 3,000+ already on the [petition](#), and for further details on the campaign, please visit the campaign [webpage](#).

Our campaign was mentioned several times during the recent Justice Questions session, as questions were raised around the issues the campaign has highlighted.

Carey Street

On Thursday I hosted a dinner discussion on mental health and wellbeing in the profession at Carey Street. Guests included senior representatives from firms including Pinsent Masons, Simmons and Simmons and Herbert Smith Freehills.

Our influencing work internationally:

An important aspect of our international work is to promote the use of English and Welsh law, the jurisdiction of England and Wales and the expertise of our members internationally. We do so, for example, through our global legal centre campaign and the organisation of English and Welsh law days/weeks in key international markets.

That is also why we are proud to have been a supporting institution of the first ever London International Disputes Week. Simon Davis moderated a session on the development of English contract law at the flagship conference on Wednesday 8th May with delegates from all over the world'

On 14th May, the Brussels Office will co-host an event with FLINN Law which will take place with a Legal Breakfast on: CJEU's opinion on CETA's Investment Court System and its implications for future EU trade policy. Panellists will be Helena Raulus, head of our Brussels Office; Leonard Hawkes, Flinn; Colin Brown, DG Trade, European Commission; Nicolas Angelet, Doughty Street Chambers, London; A representative of the Canadian Mission to the EU (TBC) and Emily Hay, senior associate at Hanotiau & Van Den Berg.

On 14th May, Helena Raulus, Head of Office will chair the British Chamber of Commerce event on: Priorities of the Finnish Presidency with Ambassador Rislakki.

On 15th May, The Brussels Office will host an event: European in-house organisations – LPP Task Force. Stephen Denyer and Sophia Adams Bhatti will be in attendance.

Supporting members at every stage of their career

During my recent trip to Zambia I attended the Commonwealth Law Conference in Livingstone. Also in attendance was the trustee of the Zambezi Sunrise Trust, John Gillette. The trust is raising funds for classrooms at Linda Community School.

The CLA have funded the first half of a two classroom block. The charity is very keen to appeal to the English profession to help fund the second half of a 'legal' block. I have promised I would pass on this appeal for funding.

A special fundraising page aimed at the English profession, 'Class Action' (please excuse the pun) has been set up: <https://mydonate.bt.com/events/classaction/492295>

Judicial appointments: interview training for solicitors Manchester - Monday 13th May 2019

Location: Townhouse Hotel, 101 Portland St, Manchester M1 6DF

In view of increasing competition for judicial appointments, this interactive course will equip delegates with the skills to help enhance your application and interview performance. This workshop has been developed specifically for solicitor applicants but the content is relevant for anyone serious about submitting a credible judicial application.

Mental health week – Panel event: Diversity and intersectionality London -Tuesday 14th May 2019

Location: The Law Society, 113 Chancery Lane, London, WC2A 1PL

To mark mental health week, we are hosting a breakfast panel session. The theme of the event will be exploring well-being with lawyers from different diversity backgrounds. The event will also feature the impact of intersectionality and MH. Join us on Tuesday 14 May for insight on this important topic.

Advocacy and Solicitor Judges' Division Spring Drinks, London - Tuesday 14th May 2019

Location: The Law Society, 113 Chancery Lane, London, WC2A 1PL

Join us for The Law Society's Advocacy and Solicitor Judges' Division Spring Drinks; an excellent opportunity to meet solicitor advocates and solicitor judges.

Male Champions for Change Report Launch- Monday 20th May 2019

Location: The Law Society, 113 Chancery Lane, London, WC2A 1PL

Join us on Monday 20 May for the launch of our male champions for change report following a series

of roundtables. Led by Simon Davis, our panel of expert speakers will discuss the outcomes of the research so far conducted as part of the Women in Leadership in Law project.

Career options and support available - Wednesday 22nd May 2019

Location: The Law Society, 113 Chancery Lane, London, WC2A 1PL

We are pleased to invite you to a free event that will help you explore career options and support available to those wishing to return to or change their career in the legal profession. The event will feature a panel of speakers showcasing different examples of the careers options available to you. Delegates will also have the opportunity to visit an exhibition space where they can find out more about the support offered by the following organisations: LawCare, Women Returners Network, Practice Advice Service, SBA, SAS, SRA.

Supporting practice excellence

Some of our upcoming events are:

Nominations are open for the Excellence Awards

There's only one week left until the final nomination deadline for the [Law Society Excellence Awards](#). Don't let success go unrecognised. Nominate yourself, your team or an outstanding individual you know before Friday 17 May to help celebrate our hard-working profession. We encourage teams, firms and individual solicitors across England and Wales to [take the opportunity to promote their success](#). There are 22 categories to choose from, including Practice Manager of the Year, Excellence in International Legal Services and Excellence in Access to Justice.

https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/support-services/events/excellence-awards/?utm_source=Newsletters&utm_medium=Council_newsletter&utm_campaign=excellenceaw19&utm_term=N%2FA

CQS Roadshow Birmingham- Monday 13th May 2019

Location: Shoosmiths LLP, 2 Colmore Square, 38 Queensway, Birmingham B4 6BJ

These seminars are designed to provide CQS members with an update on the improvements being made to the accreditation in 2019 and provide the support needed to ensure compliance with the new scheme requirements. There will be an opportunity for Q&A and for networking with speakers and members of other accredited practices.

Property Section: half-day conveyancing convention 2019 Birmingham-Tuesday 14th May 2019

Location: BPP University, 32-34 Colmore Circus Queensway, Birmingham, B4 6BN

The Law Society's Property Section, is hosting a bespoke, half-day event for property practitioners. This new-format event focuses on the most important issues affecting modern property practice.

Criminal justice roadshow London- Thursday 16th May 2019

Location: The Law Society, 113 Chancery Lane, London, WC2A 1PL

Our criminal justice system is at breaking point. Due to years of underinvestment it is facing an avalanche of problems, such as growing shortages of duty solicitors, court closures and barriers to accessing legal aid. The Law Society has been making the case to government for increased spending on criminal justice to help fix the broken system, but we need your help. Attend this event to ensure your voice is heard.

Criminal justice roadshow - Exeter, 21 May 2019 -Tuesday 21st May 2019

Location: Veitch Penny Solicitors, 1 Manor Court, Dix's Field, Exeter, EX1 1UP

Advocacy and the Vulnerable Training - Wednesday 22nd May 2019, Bradford - Afternoon session

Location: Bradford - venue TBC

The Advocacy and the Vulnerable Training was developed in conjunction with the Bar to help solicitor advocates and barristers strike the balance between advancing their client's case effectively in court whilst ensuring vulnerable witnesses are not subjected to undue stress.

CQS Roadshow, 23 May, Cardiff - Thursday 23rd May 2019

Location: The Law Society, 5th Floor, Capital Tower, Greyfriars Road, Cardiff CF10 3AG

These seminars are designed to provide CQS members with an update on the improvements being made to the accreditation in 2019 and provide the support needed to ensure compliance with the new scheme requirements. There will be an opportunity for Q&A and for networking with speakers and members of other accredited practices.

AML City of London update - Thursday 23rd May 2019

Location: Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner, Adelaide House, London Bridge, London, EC4R 9HA

This event is for MLROs, MLCOs and other AML compliance professionals working for London City firms. It will give you a platform to learn about the regulator's perspective on AML as well as upcoming changes to the UK's Suspicious Activity Reporting regime. Speakers will include representatives from the SRA, the UK Financial Intelligence Unit, BDO and the Law Society.

CQS Roadshow, 29 May, London - Wednesday 29th May 2019

Location: The Law Society, 113 Chancery Lane, London, WC2A 1PL

These seminars are designed to provide CQS members with an update on the improvements being made to the accreditation in 2019 and provide the support needed to ensure compliance with the new scheme requirements. There will be an opportunity for Q&A and for networking with speakers and members of other accredited practices.

Criminal justice roadshow – Bristol - Monday 3rd June 2019

Location: Bristol Law Society, 12 Colston Avenue, Bristol, BS1 4ST

Our criminal justice system is at breaking point. Due to years of underinvestment it is facing an avalanche of problems, such as growing shortages of duty solicitors, court closures and barriers to accessing legal aid. The Law Society has been making the case to government for increased spending on criminal justice to help fix the broken system, but we need your help. Attend this event to ensure your voice is heard.

Law Management Section People in Practice seminar, in association with Leeds Law Society- Tuesday 4th June 2019

Location: Leeds Law Society, 62 Wellington Street, Leeds LS1 2EE

Looking after the people in your practice is paramount to running a successful firm. This seminar covers key topics in legal human resources including culture and behaviour in the workplace, agile and flexible working and employment case law update.

The Annual President's and Secretaries' Conference 2019 - Friday & Saturday 14th & 15th June 2019

Location: The Law Society, 113 Chancery Lane, London, WC2A 1PL

This free, must-attend event for local law societies will incorporate a varied mix of plenary and breakout sessions. Delegates will have the opportunity to discuss common challenges, share experiences and hear practical tips from both their local law society peers and expert speakers.

<https://events.lawsociety.org.uk/ClientApps/Silverbear.Web.EDMS/public/default.aspx?tabid=37&id=2244&orgId=1>

The power of gender equality to transform the business of law; an international Symposium- 20th – 21st June 2019

Location: The Hilton Bankside, 2-8 Great Suffolk St, London, SE1 0UG

Join us at our two-day conference as we bring together professionals from across the legal profession and other sectors from both the UK and internationally, to identify the steps needed - and share practical tools - to achieve gender balance in the workplace. It will also mark the centenary of women being admitted to practise law in the UK and celebrate the successes of women in law globally.

<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/international-symposium-2019/>

Keeping members up to date

We have a number of newsletters for members. Below is a list, along with links for signing up to them.

Newsletter	Sign-up method
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Advocacy Update	Update My Law Society preferences
Anti-money Laundering Update	Law Society newsletter page
City Update	Contact the City relationship management team
Diversity & Inclusion Update	Update My Law Society preferences
In-house Forum	Update My Law Society preferences
International Update	Law Society newsletter page
Junior Lawyers Update	Law Society newsletter page
	JLD sign-up page
Legal Aid Update	Law Society newsletter page
Professional Update	Law Society newsletter page
Regional Update	Contact your regional relationship management team
Risk & Compliance Update	Join the Risk and Compliance Service
Small Firms Focus	Contact the Small Firms Division
Solicitor Judges Update	Join the Solicitor Judges Division

You can also register for the Gazette daily update [here](#).

As always, please feel free to share this update with your constituents unless otherwise specified.

Kind regards,

Christina

Christina Blacklaws

President

The Law Society, 113 Chancery Lane, London. WC2A 1PL