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The Cambridgeshire Law Society Newsletter



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1926-2022

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THE CAMBRIDGESHIRE LAW SOCIETY

Christmas Quiz

THURSDAY, 1ST DECEMBER 2022

from 7.15pm on Zoom.

Zoom details along with an entry form will be provided following registration.
We will be welcoming teams of up to 6 people from firms, in house-members
and individual entrants (who will be placed into teams of up to 6).

THE ENTRY:

🎄 Team entry: **£40** for members and **£50** for non-members.

🎄 Individual entry: **£8** for members and **£10** for non-members.

40% of the entry fees will be donated to our chosen charity LawWorks.

Our quiz master will be Josh Walters. The rounds are as follows:

🎁 **CHRISTMAS SONGS**

🌿 **THE LINK ROUND**

🎁 **PICTURE ROUND**

🌿 **INVENTIONS**

🎁 **GENERAL KNOWLEDGE (DOUBLE OR NOTHING)**

To enter please email **admin@cambslaw.com** by no later than
Monday 21st November 2021.

**CHRISTMAS JUMPERS AND CHRISTMAS FANCY DRESS
IS VERY MUCH ENCOURAGED.**



PRESIDENT'S PAGE



Michael Frape
President of the
Cambridgeshire Law Society

The death of HM Queen Elizabeth II marks the end of an era, the passing of an age. The Queen personified the British values of democracy; the rule of law; justice; fair play; tolerance; individual liberty; and (most of all) a huge sense of public duty. The extent to which those values remain British and sacrosanct is open to serious question, not least in respect of the threats posed to our democracy, the rule of law and the justice system over the last half dozen years.

Despite the monarchy being an affront to democracy and a constitutional anachronism, the Queen has been a bastion of democracy by overseeing the orderly transition between 15 Prime Ministers. Smooth (or indeed any) transitions of power have not been the case in some republics. When one considers the existential threats to democracy in the US, not least the storming of the US Capitol on 6 January 2021,

and the authoritarian so-called democracies of Russia and China, our constitutional monarchy looks to me, at least, as being the least-worst option and not to be discarded lightly. Whether that will remain the case, however, is an open question and one with which the legal profession must actively engage.

The Queen will have a different meaning for each of us and not always positive. After all for some of us, we abhor the existence of a monarch. However, when I reflect on her reign, I have been most moved by the Queen's preternatural ability to draw the vast majority of us more closely together, despite the deep divisions in our society, and also her deep and abiding sense of duty to her people and her country. We would all do well to ponder the importance of duty.

Michael

INFORMATION & EVENTS

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Website Officer

Charlotte Vallins *Ashtons Legal*

Administrator

Penelope Harrington

EVENTS 2022

Social

Thursday 1st December

Christmas Quiz on Zoom

7.15pm

L & D

Thursday 23rd November

"The Magic Beyond the Circle"

The Law Faculty, University of Cambridge

Details to follow

TACKLING THE MISUSE OF THREATS OF LITIGATION



Paul Philip
Chief Executive,
Solicitors Regulation
Authority

Over recent months many of you may be increasingly hearing about the issue of 'Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Protection' or SLAPPs being talked about in the media and within legal circles.

While many of the cases talked about in the media, and in Parliament, have focused on the actions of bigger firms in the City of London, the truth is that the issue is of relevance to law firms of all shapes and sizes – in fact any one of you could find yourself on the receiving end of such an action, at anytime.

SLAPPs pose a clear and present danger to the rule of law, free speech and a free press. They represent a misuse of litigation by the rich and powerful intent on preventing legitimate scrutiny from journalists, academics and campaigners. Common features include threatening pre-action letters and the prospect of defendants incurring ruinous costs.

The issue has risen even further in the public consciousness of late since Russia's invasion of Ukraine amid fears they may be used by oligarchs and corporations close to the Putin regime. As a result we, and others, are acutely aware of the focus on the role of solicitors in such cases.

The Code of Conduct for Solicitors enshrines professional duties which guard against bringing a SLAPP on behalf of a client. These include acting with honesty, integrity, independence, upholding the rule of law and confidence in the solicitors' profession. Equally important is the right of claimants, however unpopular, to bring legitimate claims and for solicitors to act fearlessly in their clients' best interests.

In March the SRA issued guidance to those we regulate on how to balance these duties. We warned against making allegations without merit and where the sole purpose is to discourage valid public discourse or action. For more information visit:

www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/guidance/conduct-disputes/

We responded in detail to the government's SLAPP consultation and have identified some 28 cases where we have received reports or intelligence that a firm may have been involved in a SLAPP. We have written to those naming firms in parliament asking for any further information to assist us in investigating misconduct and have contacted all firms named. We have also worked with organisations such as the Foreign Policy Centre and the Coalition Against SLAPPs in Europe to request details of potential SLAPPs so

we can investigate any potential misconduct by individuals or firms regulated by us.

Following discussions with the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, we are planning to seek statutory designation as a 'prescribed person' under the Public Interest Disclosure Act (PIDA). This should encourage reporting SLAPPs by giving full PIDA protection to whistle-blowers who disclose wrongdoing to us.

We are developing further specific guidance on SLAPPs, part of which will address concerns over oppressive litigation behaviour and tactics, such as making exaggerated claims of adverse consequences or sending letters using an intimidating or aggressive tone or language.

This potentially includes labelling correspondence "private and confidential" and/or "without prejudice" in order to seek to pressure individuals and organisations into withdrawing allegations they have made.

We have now started a review of firms which undertake litigation, examining case files to understand how and whether firms have applied our guidance to safeguard against the sort of unacceptable conduct in litigation that is seen in SLAPPs.

We will also encourage people who have been victims of SLAPPs to report the firm involved to us.

Importantly, we are committed to playing our part in cracking down on SLAPPs so genuine and appropriate scrutiny can continue, while balancing that with the need for solicitors to be able to bring legitimate claims on behalf of their clients.'

In all this we would ask for your help. If, having read our guidance, you find yourself on the receiving end of another firm acting inappropriately in respect of a potential SLAPP, please get in touch and report your concerns.

We all have a duty to ensure our legal system operates fairly and to the highest standards of integrity, and we at the SRA are determined to do all we can to make sure this happens.

KEEPING MONEY LAUNDERING OUT OF THE PROFESSION

The current situation in Ukraine has put the spotlight very firmly on the ethics of how the UK does business.

Scrutiny has fallen on a number of service providers, not least law firms, which Government and key agencies often refer to as professional enablers, along with accountants, others working in financial services, and those involved in the creation of trusts and company services.

The war in Europe has increased the use of financial sanctions on individuals and businesses – that means that solicitors cannot receive payment for any work for them unless they get a licence from the Office for Financial Sanctions Implementation. Underlying all of this is the relentless fight to keep corrupt money out of the UK economy.

Let's be really clear – money laundering is not a victimless crime. The funds often come from serious criminal activity affecting the most vulnerable in society, including people trafficking or drug rings, and the proceeds of crime are sometimes used to fund the terrorist activity that blights so many communities around the world.

Law firms and solicitors are an attractive target for criminals looking to launder their proceeds. That's because they routinely handle large amounts of client money, have key roles in many business and property transactions and provide a respectable 'source' for funds paid on.

This is something that has always mattered, it's not particular to the current international situation. Solicitors have long been responsible for guarding

against 'dirty' money making its way into legitimate systems. That's all solicitors – this is not a risk that only affects a small number of businesses serving a super-rich elite. Our work has shown that geography doesn't matter and that sometimes criminals intentionally target smaller firms in the hope that they're an 'easier touch'.

Taking action

Nearly 7,000 of the around 10,000 firms we regulate fall under the scope of anti-money laundering (AML) regulation. While tackling money laundering has always been important, the significance of having robust procedures in place has heightened in recent years. We have responded by increasing our resources, setting up a dedicated AML team in 2019 so we could be much more proactive. We have a programme of inspections – planned visits and spot checks – allowing us to look at client files and see what is really going on.

We do of course find lots of good practice – the vast majority of solicitors do what's needed – but there are still too many firms falling short. It only takes a small minority to get it wrong for confidence in all law firms to be undermined.

There are very few solicitors who are deliberately complicit in money laundering, but the damage can be done unwittingly.

Weak processes or undertrained staff can leave the door open for criminals. Every new matter, regardless of how long

a firm has known a client, should have its own risk assessment, including client due diligence, checking on the beneficial ownership of funds, and asking about any politically exposed persons involved in the process.

Complacency is not acceptable and in the last 12 months alone, we have taken 13 individuals and three firms to the independent Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal (SDT) for failing to carry out such checks. Six solicitors were struck off or suspended while the SDT issued fines of more than £110,000 for the others. We ourselves issued a fine of £232,000 to a firm for similar breaches in January. These are part of a whole raft of prosecutions we have brought to the SDT against 75 individuals and six firms in recent years, resulting in a range of fines, suspensions and strike offs.

There may be more that can be done to signal just how significant this work is, making sure that all solicitors, law firms and others take their responsibilities as seriously as we, the public and the Government expect them to.

We live in an increasingly uncertain world. This is one area where we can remove uncertainty and be absolutely clear about what the legal sector has to do to tackle crime and its proceeds. I think that has to be in everyone's interests.

Paul Philip
Chief Executive,
Solicitors Regulation
Authority



THE VIEW FROM CHANCERY LANE



Michael Frape
Law Society
Council Member for
Cambridgeshire &
Peterborough

Election of the Deputy Vice-President of The Law Society of England and Wales

In August, it was confirmed that Richard Atkinson had been elected as the Deputy Vice-President of The Law Society and will therefore be President when The Law Society celebrates its bicentennial year in 2024-2025. Richard is a criminal legal aid practitioner based in Kent; he has been a Council Member for the Kent constituency since 2016 and has also chaired The Law Society's Criminal Law Committee for 6 years, as well as being a member of its Policy and Regulatory Affairs Committee.

Legal Aid is under serious threat as a result of government funding constraints. The situation has become so serious that criminal legal aid barristers have gone on strike and The Law Society has identified numerous Legal Aid 'deserts' across the country where legally-aided advice and representation is very restricted and under serious threat of disappearing. The consequent threat to access to justice and the rule of law is serious. It is therefore very timely that Richard has been elected to the leadership team representing the solicitors' profession.

The future of the Solicitors Indemnity Fund (SIF) - the latest

The Solicitors Indemnity Fund ("SIF") was closed to new entrants from 1 September 2000. From that date PII cover was provided by private insurers in the open market. This has been broadly successful with lower premiums in the main, but there was a problem for firms which opened after that date and then closed without a successor practice. Commercial insurers did not provide cover for claims arising more than 6 years after closure, which is known as post-six year run-off cover (PSYRO). By contrast, SIF provided such cover indefinitely. The absence of PSYRO for some solicitors was clearly bad for them, but also very bad for clients suing an impecunious and uninsured defendant.

The Law Society arranged a temporary holding position whereby new firms had the benefit of SIF's PSYRO. But when the Legal Services Act 2007 transferred regulatory functions to the SRA, PII cover became a matter for the SRA, who proposed the closure of SIF in 2013. Thanks to lobbying by The Law Society and others, the closure date has been periodically extended whilst the SRA seeks a long-term solution.

The current position is that the SRA is considering the responses to the consultation paper it issued at the beginning of August and has extended the SIF closure date to 30 September 2023 in order to allow time to find a permanent solution. In essence, the SRA is most concerned about the position of consumers in respect of post-six year claims. The position of corporate clients is less clear. The Law Society submitted a detailed response to the consultation

paper and will continue to lobby the SRA on behalf of the solicitor profession.

Chartered Institute of Legal Executives (CILEX) and the SRA

At its July AGM, CILEX revealed that it had initiated talks with the SRA regarding the possibility of the SRA taking over the regulation of its members from CILEX Regulation Ltd. There are about 20,000 Legal Executives compared with about 160,000 practising solicitors. Due to economies of scale the cost of regulating solicitors is cheaper than Legal Executives (currently £367 c.f. £306).

There are clear implications for the solicitor profession in what is proposed. For example, there would be significant potential for confusion between the two types of lawyer. The Law Society is a significant stakeholder and will therefore advocate the interests of its members on this issue.

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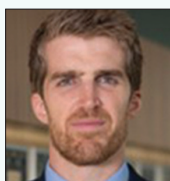
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AN UPDATE FROM THE LAW SOCIETY'S REGULATORY AFFAIRS AND ECONOMIC CRIME TEAM



Rob Cummings
Head of Regulatory
Affairs and Economic
Crime and his team

The Law Society's Regulatory and Economic Crime Team provided a comprehensive update on several matters currently under their remit on 13 July 2022. We set out an abbreviated note of the key points below.

■ Solicitor's Indemnity Fund (SIF)

The SRA received a huge response to the SIF consultation, reporting:

"The majority of the 333 respondents did not support ending the requirement for the cover, with key themes in the feedback including the potentially significant impact on the small number of individual consumers who make claims, and that the profession was willing to contribute toward funding any future arrangements."

Consequently, the SRA decided to delay any decision on the closure of SIF for 12 months, so that they could explore alternative options. The three options they are currently considering are:

- The retention of SIF, with changes to reduce operating costs, funded by a levy
- A Consumer Protection Fund, run within or alongside the Compensation Fund
- A voluntary scheme, operated by or on behalf of the Law Society

The Law Society has engaged in constructive discussions with the SRA and continues to advocate for the retention of SIF. We expect further consultation on the SRA's ultimate decision.

■ Professional Indemnity Insurance

The hard market for solicitors' PII is ongoing, with 10-15% increases in premium prices likely in the main

October renewals. Firms doing conveyancing work will face scrutiny. Underwriters are reluctant to take on new risks, which means that it will be harder than usual to switch insurers. It is a sellers' market, so firms must be proactive providing details about their risk management when completing their proposal form. Changes to the SRA's minimum terms and conditions mean that first-party losses are now explicitly excluded from your primary PII cover. If you do not already have a cyber insurance policy in place, talk to your broker to determine what cover you require, and give serious consideration to purchasing appropriate cyber insurance.

■ Financial Penalties

In November 2021, the SRA consulted on increasing its internal powers regarding financial penalties **for traditional firms and individuals**. The Lord Chancellor has personally intervened in this matter and the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) has agreed to increase the SRA's fining powers to **£25,000**. The Law Society **strongly opposed** the steep increase at all stages. We opposed the increase for many reasons including concerns around:

- the lack of independence within the SRA between decision makers and prosecutors, as well as the lack of transparency around SRA decisions
- the right of appeal to the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal (SDT) not being an adequate safeguard

The SDT remains the most appropriate jurisdiction for more serious and complex matters. We will closely monitor the impact of the increased fining powers to ensure regulation is proportionate and effective.

■ Rule changes to health and wellbeing at work

The SRA is seeking to reinforce its powers to deal with risks to clients and the public when these stem from a poor work culture in law firms. The SRA also seeks to clarify its approach to situations where a solicitor's health

issues affect their ability to practise or to participate in enforcement processes – for instance because illness means a hearing cannot fairly proceed.

The Law Society's response on wellbeing made the following points:

- We are supportive of the principles of treating people fairly but oppose the introduction of additional regulation
- The SRA has not made the case for the additional regulation and itself says that firms should have applicable policies in place
- The SRA should use its existing powers, produce guidance and use comms to highlight good practice
- Existing principles require solicitors to act with integrity and in a way that upholds public confidence in the profession, and in a way that encourages EDI

The Law Society's response on health made the following points:

- We oppose the health proposals, which are unclear and potentially wide reaching, with implications for changes to the character and suitability test that solicitors must pass in order to join the profession
- Given the risk associated with this type of change, the SRA should have a strong body of evidence to introduce this and they do not
- We have offered to work with the SRA and key stakeholders, e.g. Lawyers with Disability Division, to develop more suitable policies

The consultation closed on 27 May 2022, and we are awaiting the SRA's response.

For more information about any of the above matters or on any other regulatory matter please do not hesitate to contact the Law Society's **Membership Engagement team** who can put you in touch with the relevant staff member or Law Society resource.

Rob Cummings and his team.

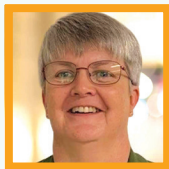
MOVERS AND SHAKERS



Kate Harris
Legal Director
Birketts

Here is a round-up of the latest moves, promotions and achievements of Cambridgeshire Law Society's members...

Slater & Gordon welcomes Rehabilitation Coordinator



Fiona Flynn joined Slater & Gordon's Cambridge office in June, having spent the last 15 years working in a senior management

capacity at a local Case Management Company, specialising in Traumatic Brain Injury and Complex Disabilities.

Fiona is a qualified social worker by profession and has worked in adults and children's services across Cambridgeshire. As a Rehabilitation

Coordinator for Slater & Gordon, Fiona offers an enhanced service to clients experiencing complex and life changing injuries and is involved at the earliest stages. This enables clients to benefit from therapeutic support and commence a rehabilitation plan using statutory, charitable, and voluntary agencies, whilst funding for private plans is sought through litigation.

Fiona said: *"I am relishing the chance to be involved at such an early stage of a client's rehabilitation journey. I have been made to feel so welcome and I am really interested in learning more about a client's litigation journey as well as helping support them with their rehabilitation goals."*

DEALS OF THE QUARTER

We are continuing to celebrate the successes of our member firms and to bring you news of the biggest deals and wins from across the County. Here's what's been going on this quarter....

Birketts advises on sale of Real Regulatory Limited to tranScrip

Birketts has advised the owner of Real Regulatory Limited on its sale to life sciences consultancy firm tranScrip for an undisclosed sum.

Real Regulatory is headquartered in Dublin and has offices in Malta and Ely, Cambridgeshire. The business has operated for more than 20 years, specialising in European regulatory affairs, quality systems and compliance for products including medicines, medical devices and drug device combinations. Managing Director Karen Real also brings more than 35 years' experience in the pharmaceutical industry to the business and will continue in her role as Managing Director at Real Regulatory following the acquisition.

tranScrip, backed by Palatine Private Equity's Impact Fund, is a leading contract drug developer, working with more than 250 companies since their inception in 2008. Their pharmaceutical experts provide a wide range of services and hands-on support to their clients to maximise the chance of their project's success. Their expertise include rapid due diligence exercise, designing complex development programmes and defending regulatory submissions across various therapy areas.

Corporate Partner **Nick Burt** led the Birketts team, with support from Kevin Wilson (Corporate), Alice Wooler (Corporate), Olivia Toulson (Employment) and Robbie Watson (Corporate Tax).

Speaking after the deal, Karen Real said: *"tranScrip's work in the sector speaks for itself. This acquisition secures a bright future for both our companies and I am excited to join their team. My thanks to Nick and all those at Birketts who advised on this deal - when conducting cross-border work such as this it's important to have experts on hand to guide you, and that's exactly what we had."*

Nick Burt added: *"The strengths of Real Regulatory and tranScrip will complement one another very well. Karen was a pleasure to work with and we look forward to seeing both businesses grow in the future."*

Birketts advise SDI Group plc on the acquisition of LTE Scientific Limited

Birketts, the top 100 law firm, has advised SDI Group plc on the successful acquisition of LTE Scientific Limited.

Having previously worked with SDI Group plc (SDI Group) on numerous deals, including SDI Group's acquisitions this year of Safelab Systems and Scientific Vacuum Systems, Birketts were instructed by SDI Group to advise on the acquisition of the entire issued share capital in LTE Scientific Limited (LTE Scientific).

SDI Group designs and manufactures scientific and technology products for use by the life science, healthcare,

astronomy, consumer manufacturing and art conservation markets and LTE Scientific joins SDI's growing portfolio of specialised scientific manufacturers.



Established in 1947, Oldham-based LTE Scientific specialises in the manufacture, supply and service of medical and laboratory equipment. With an impressive client base in both public and private sectors, including healthcare, further education, pharmaceutical and food/beverage, the business has built up a strong international presence.

Birketts Corporate Partner, Nick Burt led the team, assisted by Stephanie Newman (Corporate), Olivia Toulson (Employment), Robbie Watson (Corporate Tax) and Charmaine Rolfe (Property).

On the acquisition, SDI Group's CEO Mike Creedon commented: *"We are pleased to have LTE Scientific as part of our Sensors and Control division, it is an impressive business that will certainly benefit our growth strategy. Once again Nick and his team at Birketts provided the efficient and comprehensive advice we needed to ensure a successful deal."*

Birketts' Nick Burt added: *"It was a pleasure to work with Mike and his team at SDI on this latest acquisition. LTE Scientific is an impressive company and I'm looking forward to watching it continue to prosper as part of the SDI Group portfolio."*

DIVERSITY MATTERS – A SPOTLIGHT ON THE DIVERSITY ACCESS SCHEME



Scott Smith
Senior Associate,
Howes Percival LLP

In this issue's Diversity Matters, we will be shining a spotlight on the **Law Society's Diversity Access Scheme**. The scheme has been running since 2005, but many in the profession know little about it, so, what is it, how does it work and why is it worth getting involved?

■ WHAT IS THE DIVERSITY ACCESS SCHEME?

The Diversity Access Scheme is a scholarship programme run by The Law Society in England and Wales which supports aspiring solicitors from disadvantaged backgrounds. It aims to remove barriers to the profession and improve diversity through supporting those who have a strong ambition and the attributes to be a solicitor, but who may struggle to access the profession without that support.

The scheme has supported more than 250 individuals since its inception with 15 awards made last year, and continues to grow with application numbers last year triple what they were in 2017. The majority of those who were involved in the scheme grew up in low income households and were the first in their family to go into higher education. The scheme has also helped many applicants who have disclosed a disability or who are from Black and other minority ethnic backgrounds.

■ HOW DOES THE SCHEME WORK?

Applicants can apply for a scholarship if they can demonstrate the ability and commitment to become a solicitor as well as a socio-economic disadvantage or other exceptional circumstance related to their gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, health, disability or

education. Full guidance for applicants is available on the Law Society website. Applications for the 2023/2024 awards can be made online from around February/March next year.

Successful applicants will receive a range of support including financial support to fund the LPC or SQE, a solicitor mentor to guide them through the process of entering the profession and work experience placements throughout the profession.

Solicitors and firms who would like to sponsor, mentor or offer work experience can contact the scheme at any time by email (diversityaccessscheme@lawsociety.org.uk) to discuss what support and opportunities they can provide. The scheme administrators are particularly looking for mentors at the time this article goes to press, so do contact them if you are interested.

■ WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF BEING INVOLVED?

The benefits for the applicants are clear – simply put, one awardee said "I wouldn't be a qualified solicitor without the Diversity Access Scheme". Alumni from the scheme have gone on to see success in a range of legal careers including the Crown Prosecution Service, in-house teams within banks, hedge funds and charities, as well as private practice including at "Magic Circle" firms.

Not only does the scheme offer great support for its awardees, the scheme is also addressing a wider need to remove barriers to accessing the profession and increase diversity.

There are also a whole host of benefits for the firms and solicitors who mentor and support the successful scheme applicants. Involvement in the scheme makes a high-profile statement about your commitment to social mobility and fair access to the profession, presents staff engagement opportunities through mentoring as well as providing potential recruitment opportunities and access to a diverse pool of work experience candidates. Candidates are selected on merit within the pool of eligible applicants, and firms have found the work experience candidates to be of "high quality, motivated and strong" with one of their mentors commenting that "it's a great scheme that addresses a real need".

If you are interested in finding out more about the scheme, why not check out the Law Society website www.lawsociety.org.uk/campaigns/diversity-access-scheme or contact the administrators using the email address above.

If you have a story or opinion to share about your experience of EDI within the Cambridgeshire legal community, or want to get involved with our Diversity Matters initiative please get in touch with Scott Smith our EDI officer (scott.smith@howespercival.com) or Penelope Harrington our administrator (admin@cambslaw.com)!



**The Law
Society**

CYPG UPDATE



Melissa Barker
PR Manager,
Cambridgeshire Young
Professionals Division

CYPG/CJLD/ICAEW Ball 3rd September

The first Summer Ball post-COVID-19 was a great evening and well attended. It was hosted by the usual collaboration of CYPG and CJLD as well as ICAEW joining the host collaboration for the first time, bringing an even wider reach of attendees from the many companies in Cambridge.

Murray Edwards College provided a wonderful setting for 'a night under the stars' with live music from Turntable.

The charity raffle raised almost £1,000 for the three hosts' chosen charities to be split evenly between Cambridge Cancer Help Centre, Cambridge Rape Crisis Centre and Mind.

Upcoming events

Our next Thirsty Thursdays are on Thursday 13th October and Thursday 10th November. We will confirm the venues in due course.

Our next event is on Wednesday 26th October.

We will also have our popular traditional wine tasting evening on Friday 2nd December so do put these dates in your diaries and look out for the emails. If you are not already on the mailing list and wish to be added, please email cyspg.org@gmail.com.

Committee Vacancies

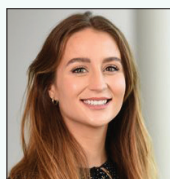
We are looking for enthusiastic new

committee members to help with the running of CYPG. We are initially looking for Social Secretaries to organise events, with the aim of having a smooth transition when current members of the committee leave. If you would be interested, please send us a paragraph on why you want to join and what you could bring to the committee.

We look forward to seeing you at our next events.



CJLD UPDATE



Libby McKane
Publicity
Representative

2022 has been a busy year so far for CJLD with socials each month and plenty of fresh faces. This year we have been pleased to see the return of in-person events and to have been able to meet members old and new in the flesh. Along the way, it's been a pleasure to raise funds for our 2022 charity, the Cambridge Rape Crisis Centre (CRCC), which continues to do invaluable work supporting those affected by sexual assault.

We began the year with a virtual cocktail making class, in which we

made 3 delicious drinks with the help of the Little Gin & Rum Company. This whetted our appetites for further opportunities to get together. Next up, in March, the CJLD met for an evening of bowling, proceeds from this event went to CRCC - we raised a total of £137. Since then, we have held an array of opportunities to meet and network with junior lawyers in Cambridge, including going to the Lockhouse Games escape rooms, eating pizza on Parker's Piece and punting along the Cambridge Backs.

Excitingly, this year has seen a post-pandemic revival of the Annual Ball which we hosted in conjunction with CYPG and ICAEW in September. "A Night Under the Stars" held at Murray Edwards College featured a live band,

a charity raffle and some fabulous food. In total, over £1600 was raised for charity. After a few years bereft of the ball, it was great to see everyone in black tie and enjoying the evening.

Looking forward, we have several events in the diary including a networking event hosted with our sponsor Errington Legal which will take place in October, and an Education Event. This will be a great opportunity for students to gain an insight from various speakers into topics such as training and routes to qualification. We hope to welcome new members to CJLD as the incoming trainees and students get started this Autumn and will be recruiting for our 2023 committee soon - we hope you will get involved!

WHO'S WHO? ANDREW LIKA



I recently joined Cambridge Law Society, right after finishing my degree in law at St

John's College, University of Cambridge. I am Corporate Partnerships officer alongside John Wright, and my role focusses on developing partnerships with the University of Cambridge and with Anglia Ruskin University. Having been President and social secretary of St John's law society where I liaised with law firms and every category of lawyer, I feel well-equipped for the role, and I am excited to get started.

I have lived in Cambridge for the past 12 years. I attended Ridgefield Primary School, Coleridge Community College,

Hills Road Sixth Form College, St John's College, University of Cambridge, and I am now a trainee solicitor in Vardags' Cambridge office.

Moving to and working in London seemed a given after my first year at university. In fact, it seemed like the only option available to me. But, later in my studies I was given the opportunity to intern in Cambridge and after that offered a job. I felt lucky to be given a chance to see beyond the London offices. Many of my peers do not realise that there is magic beyond the Circle or have found out too late. I am fortunate to have held on to a strong support network in my family and friends, while saving on London's cost of living (albeit Cambridge is not the best city

to compare London to). The question is how can we show students that there are many benefits of working in regional firms?

In November, a panel will be held in the University of Cambridge Law Faculty. Partners from Cambridge firms will discuss their experiences of life in the region. The discussion will be followed by networking for students with partners and more junior lawyers alike. I hope that this will offer students a useful glimpse into legal life outside of the City.

Furthermore, I am helping launch the Good Citizenship Award for students from the universities to apply to. Read more below.

CLS' GOOD CITIZENSHIP AWARD

The Good Citizenship Award is intended to recognise a student enrolled with either Anglia Ruskin University or the University of Cambridge during the academic year 2022-2023, who has made a notable contribution to the welfare of residents of Cambridgeshire using legal advice or procedures.

The Award's criteria are as follows:

1. Credible impact: what tangible difference has the student made to Cambridgeshire and its residents or communities?
2. Has the student demonstrated how they have used legal advice or procedures to improve the lives of others?
3. How has the student focussed on residents of Cambridgeshire or its communities?

1. CREDIBLE IMPACT

To determine the effectiveness of a student's plan to improve the lives of residents or communities of Cambridgeshire, it is important that the applicant provides some evidence

of their initiative's capacity to help, or evidence of the initiative's potential to help, the welfare of Cambridgeshire residents or its communities. Thus, there could be testimonials from residents who have already been positively impacted, or other evidence to prove the future impact of the student's initiative.

2. DEDICATION TO THE LAW

The opportunity to view the law in action during their degree will provide students with invaluable experience before they begin applying for and entering legal practice. As lawyers, we use the law every day to benefit clients. Learning how the law can be used to serve our communities enables us to learn and deepen our skills of communication and empathy with people from all walks of life.

3. FOCUS ON THE CAMBRIDGESHIRE COMMUNITY

Cambridge is now widely known for its economic inequality. As someone who has both lived in Cambridge and studied at the University of Cambridge, I think it

is fair to say that the University felt like an unreal bubble compared to the rest of the city. So, it would benefit students to understand what life is like for residents outside the University, and it is hoped that this Award could also help change the perception of Cambridgeshire's residents towards University students.

The prize for each Award winner is £200, kindly funded by CLS, and there will be a separate award for students from Anglia Ruskin University and the University of Cambridge. The Award will be judged by a panel comprised of a Cambridgeshire Law Society Committee member, a Law Faculty representative, and a current or former Law student from the respective university. Entries for the Award are now open, with the Award ceremonies held at the end of the 2022/23 academic year.

Please direct any questions to andrewlika00@gmail.com.

Andrew Lika
Trainee Solicitor, Vardags

WHAT CLIENTS WANT ROUNDTABLE



Anna Mortenson
General Counsel
Nichino Europe Co. Ltd

On 8 September CLS hosted its inaugural In-House lawyers' panel session - **"What Clients Want"**. Taking place at Botanic House, courtesy of Mills and Reeve (thank you very much!) the audience was treated to nearly two hours of the valuable time of the GCs for AstraZeneca, Cambridge University Press & Assessment, Nichino Europe and Arm.

OUR PANEL



Greg Mueller, Deputy
General Counsel,
AstraZeneca



Catie Sheret, General
Counsel, Cambridge
University Press &
Assessment



Tom Fairley, Deputy
General Counsel, Arm



Anna Mortenson,
General Counsel,
Nichino Europe.



Our Panel chair,
Chris Hoole of Appleyard
Lees, expertly hosted
the evening.



A total of 24 colleagues from our profession attended the prestigious event, sponsored by insurance brokers, UKGlobal. There were representatives from Eversheds, M&R, Ashtons Legal, Birketts, HCR Hewitsons, Appelyard Lees, Howes Percival, J A Kemp, Simmons Wavelength, Tees Law, Venner Shipley and Woodfines. Questions and answers were organised into hot topics covering:

■ CHOOSING EXTERNAL COUNSEL

- answers ranged from word of mouth or reputation to full RFP tendering processes. Panels were also used for routine bulk work and the GCs commented that these are reviewed periodically, typically on a 24 month cycle. The type of work was the driver for choice of process for selection of external lawyers - the smaller jobs going to regular contacts, with big ticket items being run through the full tendering process, often requiring management or board approval.

The Panel unanimously agreed that rankings are not important in choosing counsel although poor reviews may impact. Location was not as important as reputation but a presence in key locations globally whether directly or through best-friend law firms was seen as a big advantage for cross-border work.

The overall conclusion on this point was that the GCs would like to grow their involvement with local law firms and are open to discussions about secondments and test deals. It's a matter of developing the legal

Remote working following covid was not seen as an issue for in-house lawyers personally or in interactions with external counsel

ecosystem in Cambridge and the surrounding area.

■ COSTS

– always an emotive subject on both sides of the fence. Transparency and predictability were important to all Panel members – sudden hikes in fees that are not forecast were a real no-no but regular updates, at least monthly were welcomed. There was confirmation that value for money is important but quality is a must so there is no race to the bottom for external legal work at the top end. In more routine work, savings will be searched for so firms may want to price that into their offerings to in-house departments when planning a new proposal.

■ TECHNOLOGY AND LEGAL DEVELOPMENTS

– AI is a useful tool but cannot replace the legal mind completely (thank goodness). The Panel members thought that not having AI/IT applications would leave firms falling behind the curve and would create inefficiencies which might mean higher fees for the in-housers to justify. Also, labour-saving and mistake correcting software has got to be a good thing for business to run better so everyone should embrace it. For the larger businesses, AI is regularly reviewed for adoption in-house. For smaller firms, IT enhancement is expected to be used by external law firms perhaps on a partnership basis. There is so much room for growth but technology needs to catch up with and meet the expectations of the buyers...

■ SOFT SKILLS

– Equality and diversity are hot topics for all in-house lawyers particularly those with advanced ESG policies based on international rules such as those provided by the UN Global Compact. All suppliers are affected, which includes law firms. There will be a growth in monitoring suppliers' equality and diversity policy creation and implementation with an emphasis on "do they live by their own rules?" for everyone concerned. A good discussion around how the profession can and should take steps to improve equality and diversity for the next generation was had – and the suggestion was put that law firms should be at the forefront of that work. As a profession we are all responsible for this area and should support each other actively to achieve our goals.

In terms of educating in-house teams – all panel members confirmed that seminars, blogs and articles from law firms are welcome and form part of the self-education of team members. Upskilling in-house and external teams in a more structured way though was seen as an important part of future planning and proofing for teams in-house and external firms.

Remote working following covid was not seen as an issue for in-house lawyers personally or in interactions with external counsel. No real change had been observed – we all carried on doing the good things we do from behind a different desk.

Technology / Legal Developments

1. Is the use of software by external counsel important to you and, if so, what are the advantages/disadvantages?
2. Do you see a future in the use of artificial intelligence?
3. What are the current and future challenges facing the legal sector and/or your sector?

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Labour-saving and mistake correcting software has got to be a good thing for business to run better so everyone should embrace it

And finally... value add means different things to different people. For one Panel member it was regular communication, preferably by phone or in person. Another Panel member commented that value add would be working outside the brief if required, as an add on to achieve the best outcome in the job. Another felt that clear understanding of the area of work and the business constraints and ambitions was much appreciated and would lead to more instructions in the longer term.

So all in all, a successful evening.

Next: A networking evening perhaps in NY 2023. See you there.

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MILLS & REEVE

GENERAL UPDATE FROM PARLIAMENTARY LIAISON OFFICER



Chris Thomas
Trade Mark Attorney
and IP Solicitor
Appleyard Lees

CLS participation in National Law Society Forum

The CLS has been asked by the Law Society to participate in a Parliamentary Liaison Forum for Local Law Societies. The Forum will establish an ongoing dialogue between CLS and the Law Society's Public Affairs and Campaigns team, which lobbies the government and parliament on behalf of the legal profession. The Forum will provide CLS with an opportunity to feedback directly to Law Society's Public Affairs representatives on its members views and experiences to ensure that these are reflected on a national level in evidence provided to select committees, ahead of parliamentary debates. The first Forum will take place on Thursday 20 October 2022. If you would like to provide any comments please let us know by contacting CLS, Parliamentary Liaison Officer, Chris Thomas on Chris.Thomas@appleyardlees.com.

CLS participation in SRA review of Unreserved Legal Activities Market

CLS is participating in a review conducted by the SRA into the nature and extent of the unreserved legal activities market. The SRA is surveying both unregulated providers of unreserved advice and small business customers who have faced legal issues to gather evidence on how providers and customers interact. The results of these surveys are intended to help understand the experiences of unregulated providers of legal advice, the potential benefits and risks to customers of legal advice, and attitudes to, and understanding of, regulation in the market. CLS is one of two law societies participating in the survey and will have the opportunity to provide feedback on behalf of its members to the SRA on the scope of the regulatory regime for unreserved legal activities. If you would like to contribute or provide any comments,

please let us know by contacting CLS, Parliamentary Liaison Officer, Chris Thomas on Chris.Thomas@appleyardlees.com.

General update - legislative proposals; Mini-Budget

With Liz Truss now in office as Prime Minister, the previous government's legislative proposals outlined in the Queen's Bill in May are anticipated to be reviewed in line with the new government's objectives. It is reported that the proposed Bill of Rights, which sought to remove the requirements for UK courts to follow Strasbourg case law and to place the onus on a claimant to demonstrate a significant disadvantage before bringing a claim, has been shelved.

The government has stated that the bill intends to reduce "red tape" by reducing regulatory requirements for businesses.

One bill which is still being brought forward is Brexit Freedoms Bill. Introduced on 22 September 2022, the government intends to end the special status of all retained EU law by 31 December 2023. The government has stated that the bill intends to reduce "red tape" by reducing regulatory requirements for businesses. The primary purpose of the Bill is to give the Government the power to amend EU law without the need for primary legislation in Parliament. Under the

European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 (EUWA), the Government already has granted appellate courts in the UK, and not just the Supreme Court, to depart from retained EU case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union. However, the Cabinet Office is now reviewing the "continued effect of the supremacy of EU law over domestic law that was made before the end of the transition period".

Members of the Criminal Bar Association are calling on Justice Secretary, Brandon Lewis, to open negotiations to end the ongoing barristers' strike. Industrial action has been ongoing since April 2022 and on 5 September 2022, the CBA announced an indefinite strike action as part of a push for the government to uplift rates by 25%, amidst a significant backlog of criminal law cases.

Faced with rising energy prices, the government has announced an energy cap for domestic consumers, capping the amount a typical household will pay at £2,500 for the next two years. The Energy Bill Relief scheme, starting on 1 October 2022 will give discounted gas and electricity prices for those on non-domestic contracts for six months.

Chancellor Kwasi Kwarteng's "Mini-Budget" delivered on Friday 23 October 2022 proposed a series of tax cuts to address the "cost of living crisis", precipitated by rising energy prices. National Insurance will be cut by 1.25%, reversing the new Health and Social Care Levy proposed by Boris Johnson. The basic rate of income tax will be cut by 1p to the pound, bringing forward a change proposed by 2024 to April 2023. The 45% tax band for people who earn over £150,000 a year will be scrapped from April 2023. Minimum service levels will be introduced by law to reduce strike actions in certain industries like the rail sector.

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Tom Vigliucci
Director at UKGlobal,
Bristol

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Contact Us

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Relationships remain key in the age of technology

Personal relationships are still the heartbeat of business success, despite the increasing use of technology. Personal relationships convey how we value one another. Personal relationships enable us to have empathy with one another's situations.

In his seminal book, "How to win friends and influence people," Dale Carnegie wrote

If there is any one secret of success, it lies in the ability to get the other person's point of view and see things from that person's angle as well as from your own.

Business relationships then are as much about understanding the challenges we all face in our daily encounters.

The search industry has seen significant changes in recent years. Massive consolidation has seen so many of the traditional search companies swallowed up into larger corporates. We have to find ways of differentiating our service offerings, building that trust in client relationships, and delivering services which conveyancers feel add value to their business.

Don't get me wrong, consolidation has brought with it huge advances in technology and customer experience. Gone are the days of endlessly calling suppliers to order reports, collating them manually, printing off reams of paper and hand delivering the search to the office.... and good riddance too! With the exception of local authority searches, most of the reports are now available same day, with many returned in minutes.

The delivery platforms are slicker, smarter, more intuitive and spot potential risks that might need to be accounted for, and errors in search requests. But some of this technological advancement has come at the expense of good, old-fashioned customer service. The personal touch.

Do we rely on technology too much? Are chat bots, apps and portals what our clients really want and need? What happens when things go wrong? People need reassurance, they need to be able to pick up the phone, or send an email, and feel as though somebody is taking a personal interest in resolving their issue rather than "chat" to a faceless bot or send messages via portals.

I recently won back a client from a rival supplier. When I asked what it was that brought them back to us they said that they felt as though they were a number, rather than a client. It was the personal touch that was missing from their communications; they didn't feel as though they ever spoke to the same person twice. There wasn't a familiar voice at the end of phone when things went wrong (as things inevitably do in conveyancing!).

In our experience 90% of orders go through with little to no intervention required. But that 10% is where relationships are made and broken. This is where knowledge, experience, and expertise really make a difference. Recognising that the conveyancer is almost certainly under pressure, whether it be from the client, agent or the other side, and being able to take that weight off and deal with the issue through to completion is a critical part of the business relationship.

Whether it's a query on a report back which requires clarification, or chasing up an expedited service. It's about trusting that the job is going to get done right, first time.

The challenge when introducing technology is that you take a step back from that personal touch. You risk losing the experience and expertise provided by the people when you are over-reliant on the technology. At Geodesys we have people who have been with us since the start, 25 years (and counting!), no amount of technology will replace their understanding and expertise. They are an integral part of our account management and customer service offering. They know the search industry inside out.

The key is getting the right combination of technology and people.

Going back to Dale Carnegie's quote; the organisations who can empathise with the clients, and understand how to respond, will be the best at winning friends and influencing others.

Kay Toon is an Account Manager at Geodesys

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- Various valuations and CGT computations on matrimonial matters as Single Joint Expert
- Party Expert on valuation in professional negligence matter
- Probate valuation of company
- Review of financial records in relation to officer dispute

Getting in touch:

FIONA HOTSTON MOORE is a partner of FRP's Forensic Services practice.

She has been instructed as an expert in approximately 300 cases in her career to date. In addition to her valuation expertise, Fiona is also often instructed to provide expert opinion on a range of matters including tax disputes (including EBTs, film schemes, entrepreneurs' relief and Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), officer and employee fraud, auditor and tax adviser professional negligence claims, shareholder disputes, agency disputes and insurance claims.

Professional qualifications

Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants (FCA)
Chartered Tax Adviser (CTA)
Member of the Academy of Experts (MAE)
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Often the report will be confined to the provision of a written statement or report but in some cases could include giving oral evidence in a court. In most cases the report will be prepared in accordance with Part 35 of the Civil Procedure Rules and for the benefit of the Court. It can be provided for either party to a dispute but sometimes the surveyor will be appointed jointly by the parties.

The surveyor will take a completely independent view as his duty is to the Court rather than either party. The report will follow the RICS Practice Statement & Guidance Note "Surveyors Acting as Expert Witness".

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REMEMBER A CHARITY
IN YOUR WILL WEEK

5-11 September 2022

PUBLIC APPETITE GROWS FOR LEAVING GIFTS IN WILLS TO CHARITY

A record number of people in England and Wales are supporting charities with gifts in Wills. 10,670¹ different charities received a gift from a Will last year and 37,242 charitable estates were identified – a 10.7% increase on the previous year. This reflects the growing appetite for legacy giving and the key role the legal sector plays in providing impartial information for clients about how to go about it, while ensuring that people's wishes for family and friends are met.

This news comes at the start of **RememberACharity Week** (5th -11th September 2022), the nation's annual public awareness campaign for charitable gifts in Wills. It echoes recent research showing that more than 1 in 5 Wills handled by UK legal advisers (22%)² now include a donation to charity.

The public supports a wide spectrum of charitable causes, from researching treatment for cancer and dementia to supporting vulnerable children and adults, taking care of pets and animals, mental health support, rescue services and many others. Over a third (37%)³ of charitable Wills named just one charity, but more than one fifth (21.7%)⁴ contained two.

When it comes to location, the areas with the highest concentrations of charitable Wills in 2021 include Brighton, Birmingham, Portsmouth,

Bournemouth and Exeter. Areas that have seen the most annual gains in charitable estates are Brighton, Kingston-upon Thames and Ipswich.

Gifts in Wills are a critical source of funding for charitable services across the country, raising more than £3 billion for good causes annually. Generous tax reliefs make gifts in Wills one of the most efficient ways of donating. In the UK, charitable bequests are exempt from the 40% Inheritance Tax and, when clients donate 10% or more of the value of their estate, the IHT rate is reduced to 36%.

Lucinda Frostick, Director of RememberACharity – a consortium of 200 charities, says: "Legal advisers play a crucial role in helping the public understand all the options open to them when they write a Will. Our research shows that even the simplest of references to the option of leaving

a gift in a Will to charity can double the chances that a client will choose to do so. And those gifts really can be transformational for UK charities. Today, that income is more critical than ever."

The consortium works all year round to normalise charitable Will-writing across the UK by raising awareness of legacy giving among legal professionals and the public. Through its free campaign Supporter scheme for solicitors and Will-writers, it offers promotional resources and useful guidance for referencing gifts in Wills with clients.

To find out more or join the existing network of campaign supporters, see: www.rememberacharity.org.uk/advisers

¹ Smee & Ford

² TheSavantaWill-writing survey, commissioned by RememberACharity

³ Smee & Ford

⁴ Smee & Ford



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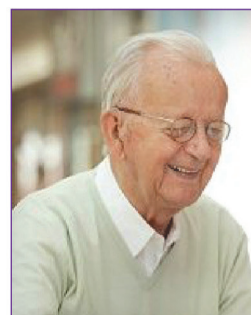
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It publishes care sheets, six newsletters a year and a scientific journal, and arranges symposia and other meetings around the country.

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Gifts in wills have been critical to our work and are the only way we will be able to reach the increasing number of people living with arthritis.

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The Respite Association

Caring for Carers



The Respite Association was born on May 16th 2001. A group of people, all with first-hand experience of the stress put on carers, had come to realise that there was very little support available for those caring for loved ones. That small but committed group of people decided that the best way forward was to create an organisation whose sole aim was to care for the carers by providing respite.

When you are caring for someone the task can be overwhelming. You can be 'on duty' for 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with no breaks or holidays. This is too much to ask of anyone.

So what do we actually do?

We are a small charity that makes a big impact. We provide short term assistance by funding appropriately qualified respite care for people with disabilities, long-term physical or mental health conditions, and those who are terminally ill in order that their regular unpaid carer can be allowed to take a much needed break.

Breaks can take the form of anything from enabling attendance at an evening class to a weekend break or longer. We also provide free week long seaside holidays to enable carers to recharge their batteries. In 2021 we purchased our first bricks and mortar respite facility – a purpose built holiday bungalow in Cornwall. We also have a caravan in North Wales.

Who will we help?

Many of the people who are at home caring for loved ones are forced to live on very limited incomes. It is these people that we are working to help.

What does it cost?

Whilst providing suitably qualified carers in the home or funding a temporary place in a residential care centre can be expensive, the benefits to the carer are beyond measure. The cost and level of support varies dramatically from a few pounds to several hundred. Our average grant is around £450.



Of all the unsung heroes in the world, carers come top of my list. It is humbling to read of the love, time and dedication that carers give so constantly to others: their voices are seldom heard, as they so seldom complain. When they DO call for help we must react at once, with support and understanding and gratitude.

And lovely money: what seems like peanuts to larger organisations would be a godsend to the Respite Association, as it means that we can help ease the burden (which would be intolerable in our own lives) and bring some comfort, escape and freedom to those who give their all to others every day and night, week after month after year.

These are my heroes: these are the stars I admire and applaud. Knowing that every gift to Respite will bring happiness touches me hugely.

Joanna Lumley
Patron



The Respite Association, Highfield Barn, Lewdown, Okehampton, Devon EX20 4DS

☎ 01566 783383 ✉ help@respitassociation.org

🌐 www.respiteassociation.org

The Respite Association is a Registered Charity No: 1193232 (Formerly 1086598 from 2001 to 2021)

Registered with



Direct Payments to Pay for Social Care Support.

Local authorities, after a care assessment has decided that an individual is entitled to care support, they can either be offered the care support or they can have the choice to receive a Direct Payment. Direct Payments enable a person or their family to use the DP funding to arrange their own care provision.

To receive a Direct Payment, talk to your local Social Services department.

Direct Payments give a person flexibility to choose their care provider, to communicate directly with them and to change to another provider if they are not satisfied with the one they have. Control is with the person or their family.

It also gives the opportunity to 'shop around' for the best value for their budget.

Direct Payments also give the opportunity to hire your own care support. This may be that you become an employer, which does have responsibilities, but many people prefer to have wages, tax, NIC, etc. managed for them by an outside broker, accountant, etc.

If a person is already receiving practical support from their Council but would like to change to a Direct Payment, then contact the Direct Payment Support Service at your local Council.

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Data Insights Report: Planning Applications

The last few tumultuous years for the UK housing market have highlighted one stark truth: housing supply is not meeting demand. Indeed, housing is one of the core pillars of the government's levelling up agenda, underscoring the need to radically rethink the way new housing is planned and developed. Central to meeting this need will be the planning process itself.

It is the view of many that the current UK planning process is flawed, often cumbersome and a source of frustration for stakeholders across the entire spectrum, from developers to communities. Digitisation will undoubtedly play its part in transforming this process; the wealth of technologies now available (such as interactive geospatial technology, virtual simulations, and, of course, data) to inform and shape planning offer real opportunities for change. With this in mind, the halfway point of 2022 felt like a good time to step back and take a look at the data on planning applications over the past ten years.

In our newly released Data Insights Report: Planning Applications, we revisited the wealth of environmental, land and property data that we gather, manage and supply to the property industry on a daily basis, and analysed relevant datasets to provide a summary of planning trends between 2012 and 2021. Overall, we saw that, year on year, the rate of planning applications in the UK is increasing. In fact, in every region - except for London - the number of planning applications submitted per 100,000 people was at its highest in 2021, since 2012.

As well as pinpointing the regions with the highest and lowest application volumes, the report draws on data that reveals:

- Planning application types
- Granted/refusal rates
- Approval rates for renewable energy projects
- Approval rates in flood zones
- Essential amenities per approved planning application

The report also features expert commentary from **Landmark's Chris Loaring, Managing Director (Landmark Legal)**, who shares his observations on planning trends beyond 'the Covid effect' and highlights the growing implications of the journey to net zero in future planning policy.

"We know that the built environment has a huge role to play in the wider net zero ambition and that new-build development is a major factor within that. Equally, we will watch with interest to see how the data evolves in regard to planning applications relating to existing housing stock and the retrofit options and upgrades many homeowners are now choosing to undertake."

"In the near future, I would hope to see a continuation - or even acceleration - of environmental considerations in new build planning policies. Concepts such as renewable energy installations on housing developments of a certain size, for example, would be great to see. Meanwhile, new build developments could well pave the way for widespread progress in new policies for establishing electric car charging ports. This might seem, on the face of it, a small point but collectively, ease of access to electric charging points as a given would make a huge difference in easing the transition from fossil fuel based to electric transport options."

Piers Edgell, Landmark's Client Director (Landmark Geodata) closes with a powerful argument for how planning data and the levelling up agenda are inextricably linked:

"We have seen much debate and anticipation around the original Planning

Bill, and now the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill which supersedes it. In terms of the new proposed bill, it will be interesting to see how its content evolves during its passage through parliament, and precisely which elements are ultimately given final Royal Assent.

"What is notable to me, when we consider the planning data in this report through the levelling up lens, is that planning is about so much more than simply where developments will or will not be built. Every planning decision impacts the immediate environment, and so planning data could and should become a critical tool for informing and shaping social policies that aim to improve - or level up - communities. What, for example, could the kinds of planning data shown in this report tell us, when mapped against data on increasing property values or household incomes? What could the data we have summarised on amenities within the vicinity of planning applications tell us about location-specific standards of living and local needs? From a big picture point of view, we might even wonder how this kind of data might correlate with health and wellbeing indices, mortality, employment and income figures. My hunch is that it would underscore that planning has the potential to alter communities and change life-chances, more broadly than its immediate impact on the built environment."

You can access this insightful, timely and data-rich report here:

<https://go.landmark.co.uk/planning-applications-insight-report>

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FAMILY RELATIONSHIP DNA TESTING AS WE EMERGE FROM A PERIOD OF DARKNESS...

Dr Neil Sullivan



After a few years of unprecedented change, we are hopefully on the path to repairing society and a semblance of normality. So, rather than our usual in depth article on a "DNA testing" subject we thought it would be a good idea to discuss some of the causes and changes relevant to the professional services sector.

We must first offer some context by discussing firstly the effect of Covid-19 and then secondly, the war in Ukraine. The stresses caused by these events have caused heightened anxiety in the population and of course, significant changes in behaviour which are exacerbated by the use of social media channels. Tolerance and respect have taken a back seat as people seek Maslow's "Safety and Security" and as a means of self protection, can react irrationally and poorly. Whilst there are still strong memories of the pandemic we have learnt to deal with its consequences and are growing from it. The real impediment to regaining normality is now the situation in Ukraine.

To put this into context, there have been 15 pandemics since the Black Death (1331-1353) and which recorded at least 100,000 deaths. The Black Death for example, wiped out over 30% of the population. The death toll due to Covid-19 in the UK has been smaller than some other pandemics, due to better public health measures and more rapid communications. The government must take some credit for their prompt action in the early days of the pandemic, when we simply did not know what kind of virus we were dealing with. Lockdown caused a precipitous drop in demand across all sectors and of course then necessitated a substantial government intervention.

In economic terms and from

historical data, the effect of pandemics (in general) is to modestly reduce the natural rate of inflation, with actual recovery thereafter taking decades rather than a few years. In the UK the loss of life has been predominantly in the older population although we await to see the unknown effects of long covid on the wider population. Pandemic "survivors" may well be seeking to consolidate their personal security for example by risk aversion, retention of wealth, more modest investments and frugal behaviour.

If we can now please be excused a comment on inflation, then pandemics are in general associated with a reduction in inflation, a more restricted labour force and this in turn leads to an increase in real wages. So having weathered the three or so waves of viral infection, we might have expected

to come out of it into a low inflation, cautious environment. A war is a significantly different event, unlike a pandemic, it is both the destruction of life and of capital (crops, land, building, machinery, factories) and is inherently a cause of inflationary increases. Whilst Ukraine bears the brunt of the economic damage, the inflationary effect in a global economy, reaches rapidly to other nations. It is now the Ukraine war, rather than the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic, that is having the most significant effect upon our well-being. It is driving inflation and it is the source of national insecurity as people again seek safety and security.

As a company we played a significant role in outbreak testing for Covid-19 and during this rather intense time, as the government focussed on mitigation and containment, the demand for professional commissioned human identity DNA testing reduced significantly. Social services and solicitors were struggling to keep case work going and home working, in terms of client contact, was simply not the answer. However, the latent demand for DNA testing has now released and significant cost pressures are with us all (e.g. cost of living wage increases, rent, utilities). Pressures on the legal aid system still exist and need attention if we are to mitigate this high inflation environment, hold down our costs and still (as a sector) provide great service to families.

To put this into context, there have been 15 pandemics since the Black Death (1331-1353) and which recorded at least 100,000 deaths

There is a specific sector in family services that has been badly affected, by the war in Ukraine. Until Russia invaded, Ukraine was the centre of the surrogacy industry (estimated 25% market share) and of the countries that allow surrogacy, is the most permissive (with clear legal rules) and reasonably priced. It is estimated that before the war, around 2500 babies were born to Ukrainian surrogates per annum. Many surrogates and intended parents were trapped by the war and of course, the immediate reaction was for the Ukrainian surrogate to leave the country. Some made it, others have remained but have been moved to cities further West in Ukraine. Undoubtedly, the surrogacy clinics are struggling to function in this environment and this is compounded by desires to help the surrogate into a neighbouring country. This course of action may invalidate a surrogacy contract made under

Ukrainian law where surrogates do not have parental rights over the children that they carry. Altruistic surrogacy is allowed in the UK, but the birth mother is recorded as the legal parent at birth, until a parental order is made in order to change the parentage - a DNA test is required for this and around 400 of such orders are made each year. Other countries are less permissive regarding altruistic surrogacy and it may even be banned completely. We of course continue to advise our UK clients with DNA testing in this difficult situation.

Global inflationary pressures need to be brought under control and all economies will take a while to adjust. With sensible fiscal policy, predictions of an eventual lower inflationary environment next year seem robust. Post pandemic we see UK society evolving with a renewed evaluation of human connection, family and gainful

employment, there is indeed a great deal to be positive about.

About the author:

Dr Neil Sullivan, BSc, MBA (DIC), LL.M, PhD is General Manager of Complement Genomics Ltd (trading as Dadcheck®gold).

Complement Genomics Ltd (trading as Dadcheck®) is accredited by the Ministry of Justice as a body that may carry out parentage tests directed by the civil courts in England and Wales under section 20 of the Family Law Reform Act 1969.

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WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY

10TH OCTOBER 2022

Lawcare asks Legal Community to 'Tell Ten' for World Mental Health Day

Legal mental health charity LawCare is asking the legal community to tell ten friends or colleagues about their support service this World Mental Health Day.

The charity, which offers free,

confidential, emotional support to anyone working in the law including support staff and law students has supported over 10,000 people in the profession since it began 25 years ago through its helpline, email, online chat and peer support service. All the staff

LawCare

Supporting the Legal Community

and volunteers on the support service work in, or have worked in, the legal industry so understand life in the law and all its challenges.

Elizabeth Rimmer, Chief Executive of LawCare, said: "LawCare's biggest challenge has always been awareness - we want as many people in the legal community as possible to know about the service we provide so when they have a difficult time or just a bad day at work they know where they can find help. We'd like to ask for the community's help this World Mental Health Day to tell ten friends or colleagues in the industry about us - tag ten people on social media in a post about LawCare or just send an email or text. With your help we can make sure we are there for everyone working in the law when they need us."

Anyone working in the law in the UK, Channel Islands and Isle of Man can contact LawCare for free, confidential, emotional support. You can call **0800 279 6888**, email **support@lawcare.org.uk**, or access online chat at **www.lawcare.org.uk**. The charity also has a team of peer supporters, people who work in, or have worked in, the legal profession who may have been through difficult times themselves and can offer one-to-one support, friendship and mentoring over 2/3 telephone calls to those who need it. In some cases financial support is available to those who need it to pay for further counselling.

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