

Dear colleague,

Your weekly Law Society update

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 [Daily Mail](#) quotes my warning that a no-deal Brexit will make it harder to investigate cross-border crime and arrest suspects, and harder for victims to get compensation. The same story – based on our advice to members – was also picked up by the [Gazette](#), [Press and Journal](#), the [Yorkshire Post](#), the [Shropshire Star](#) and the [New Law Journal](#). Read the [Law Society guidance](#) in full.

Meanwhile, in a comment for the [Gazette](#), Law Society vice president Simon Davis examines the impact a no-deal Brexit would have on the legal profession. It was part of a comprehensive and must-read look by the Gazette at the issues we as a sector are facing. Further coverage can be read [here](#).

I appeared on BBC Shropshire to discuss women in the law and CARE's international women's day march on 3 March 2018. You can listen to the interview [here](#). It starts at 1:39:09.

The [New York Times](#) examined Chris Grayling's career and talked to Richard Miller about the impact of the cuts to legal aid. He said: "We've not quite yet got to the stage where someone has asked for a lawyer in a police station and they haven't been able to get one, but we've come very close."

The [Sun](#) reports on how to renovate your home to sell and advises getting in touch with the Law Society to find a qualified and specialised conveyancing solicitor.

Former chair of the Law Society Technology and Law Reference Group, Peter Wright has warned that lawyers may need to take action over potential breaches of data protection rules. The [Gazette](#) reports.

Law Society access to justice committee member Cris McCurley talked to [BBC Essex](#) (interview begins 1:08:00) about suggestions that victims of domestic violence have their identities protected in the media.

Labour's pledge to restore legal aid for housing and welfare benefits is covered by [The Justice Gap](#), alongside comments by Simon Davis.

[Legal Week](#) (premium content) reports UK firms based in Seoul are anxious about their businesses if there is a no-deal Brexit.

The [Gazette](#) reports junior lawyers have called for a review of the Legal Services Act after the oversight regulator's decision to approve the proposed solicitors' 'super-exam' despite

widespread opposition. In response to the Legal Services Board's (LSB) draft business plan 2019/20, the Law Society's Junior Lawyers Division (JLD) said the absence of an 'appeal or oversight mechanism' in the act to challenge the LSB's approval of applications should be addressed.

For the [Times](#) (£), Claire Christy and Hugh More examined the importance of raising a better public understanding of NDAs. In January, the Law Society issued a practice note reminding its members that NDAs cannot prevent employees making a "protected disclosure".

Co-chair of the criminal law committee Ian Kelcey appeared on BBC Radio Essex to discuss the extent victims of domestic abuse can decide whether to press charges against their abuser. You can listen to the broadcast [here](#) from 38:40. Ian also appeared BBC Radio Berkshire to discuss the decreasing number of rape convictions in England and Wales. You can listen to the broadcast [here](#). Interview starts from 1:23:00.

In a comment for the [Times](#) (£), I reflected on one hundred years of women in the law and the challenges the profession faces in the fight for gender equality.

Unconscious bias is the greatest barrier to women solicitors' career progression reports the [Gazette](#). It quotes the Law Society's [Women Leadership in Law](#) report which also contains feedback from women and men who work in the profession and whose opinions were canvassed at scores of roundtables hosted by the society. The story was also covered in [Legal Futures](#) and in the [Times](#) (£). One of the participants in the roundtables was Amandeep Khasriya who appeared on [BBC Radio Merseyside](#). Her interview starts at 37:57.

Writing in the [Times](#), Jenni Russell quotes Law Society criminal law committee co-chair Ian Kelcey talking about the impact of cuts on our justice system.

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

We submitted our initial contribution to UCL's independent review of legal services regulation led by Professor Stephen Mayson. While we would not argue that the current regulatory framework is perfect, it succeeds in its purpose. That is why we believe that further legislative reform is presently unnecessary, and improvements can be made within the scope of the current framework. Our full response paper is available on our [website](#).

Women in Leadership in Law

I am launching our Influencing for impact: the need for gender equality in the legal profession [report](#) at our annual event to mark International Women's Day on Friday 8th March. The report focuses on the women in leadership in law roundtable findings and I am also chairing an expert panel to discuss the key themes. The panel included Janet Legrand QC (Hon) (DLA Piper), Yasmin Sheikh (Diverse Matters), Aniela Foster-Turner (Siemens Gamesa), and Rob McCargow (PwC) who discussed their experiences in the profession as well as involvement in the roundtable series. The event is fully booked and is followed by a networking reception.

Following the panel event, I am hosting a Carey Street dinner focusing on the themes discussed in the influencing for impact report. Notable attendees include Michael Bates (managing partner, Clifford Chance), Rebecca Danby (assistant GC, GlaxoSmithKline),

Aniela Foster-Turner (principal legal counsel, Siemens Gamesa), Charlie Geffen (chair London corporates, Gibson Dunn), Russell Johnstone (divisional general counsel and company secretary, BT) Janet Legrand QC (Hon) (consultant, DLA Piper), Yasmin Sheikh (founder, Diverse Matters), Rob McCargow (director of artificial intelligence, PwC), Helen Ouseley (global head of diversity and inclusion, Freshfields).

Speeches

In addition to our own events on International Women's Day, I have also spoken at a number of events hosted by our members. On Tuesday I spoke at an event hosted by Capsticks, an event by Dechert on Wednesday and Osborne Clarke on Friday.

The vice president spoke at a lunch with the Association of South Western Law Societies on Tuesday. The deputy vice president chaired an event with our London based members on Brexit and its impact on firms operating in the EU.

On Friday, the deputy vice president spoke at a number of events in Preston and Lancaster including the dinner of the Preston Law Society, an event to celebrate to celebrate International Women's Day and to students at Lancaster University.

Parliamentary

On Tuesday I spoke at an event in Parliament on women in the law and in parliament. The event was chaired by Baroness Jenkin, and other panellists included Justice Minister Lucy Frazer QC MP, Helen Grant MP, Baroness Chakrabarti and Vicky Ford MP.

Our influencing work internationally:

On 5th March, The Brussels Office organised a plenary meeting with UK Brussels-based organisations to discuss Brexit issues. Around 35 people attended.

On 5th March, The Brussels Office held a roundtable on: Brexit and cross-border contractual disputes. Around 15 people attended.

On 4th March Head of International Mickaël Laurans was delighted to open and moderate a seminar on the new Astana International Financial Centre Court and international arbitration centre with Lord Woolf, chief justice of AIFC Court and Barbara Dohmann QC, Chairman, International Arbitration Centre. As part of the seminar, he signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the AIFC Court and International Arbitration Centre to cooperate and share best practices on English common law with our Kazakh colleagues, and work together to protect and strengthen the independence of the legal profession and rule of law in Kazakhstan.

On 4th March myself and the international programmes manager, Lizzette Robleto de Howarth, and the international human rights policy adviser, Marina Brillman, met with the new director of the IBA Human Rights Institute, Baroness Helena Kennedy, to discuss collaboration in the areas of rule of law and human rights.

On 5th March, the international team organised a roundtable with representatives from 60-member firms on Brexit contingency planning regarding practice rights for structures and individuals in the event of a no deal. The event was chaired by David Greene with Mickaël Laurans and EU policy adviser Anna Drozd providing updates on fly-in, fly-out, Irish requalification requirements and the state of play in key jurisdictions.

On 6th March, Mickaël Laurans spoke at a roundtable on Brexit preparation organised by the Spanish Bar and the Spanish Ministry of Justice, following the publication of the Royal Decree on 1st March.

Solicitor brand campaign

We're looking for business or consumer clients who would like to be photographed as part of our campaign to promote the value of solicitors. More details can be found [here](#).

Supporting practice excellence

As discussed at Council, today we e-mailed members to highlight our work to support them through Brexit. Big 200 firms got messages focused on our influencing work and our global legal centre campaign. To other members we emphasised our guidance and for COLPS we spoke in more detail about data protection.

Some of our upcoming events are:

Risk and Compliance annual conference 2019: preparing for change in shifting times - Friday 15th March 2019

Location: Victoria Park Plaza, London

In this popular one-day event speakers will provide invaluable advice for shaping the future of compliance in your firm and offer practical guidance to help you cultivate a best practice culture throughout your firm or department.

Competition Section seminar: UK mergers update - Tuesday 12th March 2019

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

This seminar will provide an overview of substantive and procedural developments in UK merger control in 2018 and a look ahead to the challenges ahead in 2019, providing insight into what's at the forefront of the CMA's thinking in what is likely to be a pivotal year in UK merger control.

Advocacy and the Vulnerable Training Manchester - Afternoon session - Wednesday 27th March 2019

Location: Manchester - Venue TBC

This 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.

Advocacy and the Vulnerable Training, Bristol - Afternoon session Friday 29th March 2019

Location: Bristol venue tbc

The 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.

Property Section seminar: Risk and negligence in property transactions - problems and pitfalls for practitioners, Manchester - Thursday 28th March 2019

Location: CMS Cameron McKenna Nabarro Olswang LLP, 1 The Avenue, Spinningfields, M3 3AP

As the residential property market slows and returns on commercial property are threatened by the decline of the High Street, the risk that property owners will look to the professionals who advised them to recoup their losses returns. Hardwicke Chambers' up and coming book: Risk and Negligence in Property Transactions, is therefore timely. Commissioned and published by the Law Society, this title identifies the problems, pitfalls and risks faced when acting for the buyer, seller or lender, possibly giving rise to a liability in negligence. To learn more about this, join John de Waal QC and other contributors of the book for an interactive and practical breakfast workshop in which they will share and discuss some of their insights.

Supporting members at every stage of their career

[The Junior Lawyers Division \(JLD\) 2019 annual conference and ball – Saturday 6th April 2019](#)

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

The JLD will be hosting their twelfth annual conference and ball. The programme offers a mix of panel-led discussions and workshops for personal and professional development within the legal sector. Early bird rates from £60 + VAT. www.lawsociety.org.uk/jld-conference-and-ball-2019

[Judicial appointments: interview training for solicitors - Saturday 16th March 2019](#)

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

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.

[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
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

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President

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