

SUSSEX LAW SOCIETY

REPORT OF THE
GENERAL COMMITTEE
FOR 2022/23

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE 2022/23

President:

Mr O Maxwell-Jones, Brighton

Vice-President:

Ms M Nagra, Hove

Immediate Past President:

Ms L Tarrant, Brighton

Honorary Treasurer:

Mr O Maxwell-Jones, 15 Prince Albert Street, Brighton, BN1 1HY

Honorary Secretary:

Ms E Richards, Hove

Council Member:

Mr A Bishop, Hove

General Committee:

Mr J. Bradshaw
Ms G Collins (to April 2023)
Mr L Corr
Ms C Rents
Ms E Weir
Ms S O'Sullivan

The following were co-opted onto the Committee:

Mr D Dickson, Ms J Hardaway, Mr P W Richards, Ms. G Tisshaw,

**SUSSEX LAW SOCIETY
REPORT OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE FOR 2022/23**

PRESIDENT'S REVIEW OF THE YEAR

To serve as President of the Sussex Law Society once, is an honour. To service twice is, to say the least, doubly so. Working with a committee of fellows who volunteer their time, with smiling faces, to attend committee meetings to plan how best to support the Society's members.

Throughout the year, I have received invitations to attend other local Law Societies' events as well as at national level. It was a once in a lifetime opportunity to be invited by The High Sheriff of East Sussex to attend the annual Judges' service at St. Anne's Church, Lewes. Not only to be part of a long standing tradition, but to meet many of the county's Judiciary, High Sheriff, Under Sherrif, Chief Constable, Chief Fire Officer and local mayors.

The highlight of the year, for me, has to have been the annual ball in June. It was excellent to see so many of you there. It also gave my husband, Mark, a chance to show off his skills as quizmaster. The ball, like many of our events, is very generously sponsored and this year's event was supported by [Crown Office Row](#), [Leap](#) and [Wellbeing at Work](#). As I said on the night, our sponsors have our thanks.

It is really good news that the young solicitors of Sussex have been able to bring back the Junior Lawyer's Division and are starting again to hold events for the next generation of lawyers.

This year's AGM will be the last for one of our longest serving committee members, Jeanette Lacy Scott. Jeanette has been at the heart of the Society for over 30 years and will be a hard act to follow. Jeanette joined the annual dinner for the Society's past presidents, which was held at the end of October. Many of those there remember Jeanette supporting them as well as she has supported me & the committee over the years.



(Sussex Law Society's Past Presidents' Dinner 2023)

(rear l to r: Jacqueline Hardaway, Emma Weir, Jane Wells, David Pollard, Veronica Hamilton-Deeley, Huugo Hunt, Lucy Tarrant, John Healy, Gilva Tisshaw)
(front l to r: Richard Dyson, Maureen Samuels, Michael Bailey, Jeanette Lacy-Scott, Oliver Maxwell-Jones, Manjinder Nagra, Richard Stewart, Kevin Smyth)

My thanks go out to you, the Society's members for allowing me to serve again and putting up with my monthly slots in the newsletter. To my successor, this is an amazing role, and I wish you the very best of success for the year ahead.

OLIVER MAXWELL-JONES

HON SECRETARY'S REPORT

The SLS Committee has continued to meet monthly via Zoom over the course of the last 12 months and we have also had opportunities to meet in person, most notably at the quizzes which have proved ever popular.

I had the pleasure of attending the Chichester Law Society Dinner last December, which was held in the historic Vicar's Hall at Chichester Cathedral. I represented SLS as the guest of the Chichester Law Society President,

Laura Colville and had a very enjoyable evening which included great food and some fun entertainment. Laura was able to join us at our own SLS annual ball at the Grand Hotel, in Brighton in June, which was a great success thanks to the hard work put in by Jeanette Lacy Scott, our outgoing President, Oliver Maxwell-Jones and other committee members.

I have followed Lubna Shuja in the legal press during her year as President of the Law Society. I met her, with Pat Richards (a longstanding committee member), during her year as Vice President when she was visiting local law societies to gain an understanding of the issues affecting their members; and at our annual ball in 2022 when she attended as a guest of our President. It has been great to see her in action, dealing with some important and contentious issues that impact on the profession. In December 2022 she was involved in a celebration of the 100-year anniversary of the first women solicitors being admitted to the roll and she has promoted equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) across the profession.

I will be stepping down as Honorary Secretary in November after 4 years in the post and I would like to thank everyone for their support and help with my role at the Sussex Law Society.

ELEANOR RICHARDS

HON. TREASURER'S REPORT

The draft accounts for the year ending 31st August 2023 are included with this report.

For the most part, the past year has been stable. Membership is slightly up and this year has seen an increased emphasis on generating income from sponsorship. To that end, sponsors' packages have been put together as an enticement. This isn't apparent from the accounts as some sponsorship is spread over this year's accounts and next year's.

The Society's courses continue to generate revenue, but we are still mainly offering training via webinars as this is so much more cost effective. Saying that, we are experimenting with a return to face to face in November 2023. As we all know, this area does face competition from larger providers, web-based providers, and those that offer courses for free as part of their own marketing. 'Hot' topics remain the bigger draw however, an innovative approach in providing 'packaged' or multiple seminars (of shorter duration, e.g., over lunch) is seeming to work.

The Society will continue to provide social events, even those these may only break even. These are seen as one of the core things it should be doing for its members. As one of the last professional dinners in the city, the Society's annual ball will be held again next year at the Grand Hotel in Brighton on Friday, 7th June 2024.

As always, this is your Society and with your continuing support of its courses, events and this committee, it will continue to succeed in being able to serve you, its members.

OLIVER MAXWELL-JONES

COUNCIL MEMBER'S REPORT

I have now completed a year as the representative of Sussex on the Law Society Council. It can't have been all bad as the role was up for re-election this summer and I was re-elected (unopposed!) for a further 4-year term.

I didn't have much of an idea of what to expect when I took on the role and had little idea of how the Law Society, our representative body, works. It may help others if I share some insights.

The LS Council is the sovereign body of the Law Society. It consists of 97 seats. 50 members represent 41 geographical areas and 47 members represent work practice and characteristic constituencies, for example there are members that represent employment, in house and family work interests.

Characteristic constituencies include seats for solicitors with disabilities and ethnic minorities.

It is worth bearing in mind these special interest constituencies. If you have a practice or characteristic specific issue, then you can either contact that member directly or contact me and I can refer the matter on.

A full list of constituencies is at [Council constituencies and current members](#)

Each year, in October, Council elects a Deputy Vice President. At the same time the Vice President becomes President and DVP becomes VP. Throughout my first year on Council Lubna Shuja was the President, the first Muslim president and, in my opinion, she was absolutely excellent both at running Council meetings and also in her wider role representing the profession. You will have seen that Nick Emmerson is the new President and I am sure that he will be equally competent.

Council members, with the exception of office holders, are volunteers. Council agrees the strategy and business plan of The Law Society (TLS) but it is the Board that implements them. It consists of a Chair (not a Council member), office holders, chairs of various committees and some other appointed and elected members. If the Council is "Parliament" then the Board is the "Government".

Then there is the "Civil Service" or the salaried employees of the Law Society. Some 400 employees headed up by the Chief Executive, Ian Jeffery.

To extend the UK Government analogy further there are various Committees, e.g., Membership and Communications, that report to the board.

Apologies to those that fully understood the above workings but after 30 years practising as a Solicitor it was new to me. I think that it is helpful that members, who after all pay for TLS through their Practising Certificate fees, understand its workings. It is there to represent you and a consistent theme of the Society is how to engage better with its 165,000 members.

Please do not hesitate to contact me in the coming year if there are matters that I might be able to raise in Council.

ANDREW BISHOP

REPORT OF THE CONTINUING EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Over the past year, webinars have continued to be the main form of training offered by the Society. The return to face-to-face courses is a subject which remains on the General Committee's agenda but the reality is that, unless the topic and/or speaker can guarantee high participant numbers, the costs involved in putting on a course (venue hire, refreshments, speakers' fees and expenses, travel, printing) just don't make it cost effective. However, after some feedback from members who miss the more interactive experience that courses undoubtedly provide, we have planned a face-to-face course in Brighton in November 2023 on the topical subject 'From BOMAD to Granny Annex', which will explore the legal and tax issues in helping families at the two ends of the property ladder.

The webinars offered in 2022/23 have been a mix of general practice area updates (mainly residential and commercial conveyancing) and topics around new and proposed legislation. Richard Snape presented 2 webinars on The Building Safety Act 2022 (with no doubt more to come!) which attracted a lot of interest as did John Bunker's 'TRS & Tax Planning Update' and Dominic Regan's Autumn CPR Update which focused on the new fixed costs regime.

Our big area of success this year however has been around compliance training. Against a background of the SRA now issuing heavy fines for non-compliance and the understandable concerns this is raising in our member firms, we have put together a series of 8 one-hour lunchtime sessions held every 2 weeks from September 2023 on some of the most important areas of compliance for law firms. Each webinar is priced at just £30 + VAT or £200 + VAT for the whole series and it is proving extremely popular. We have also introduced a new pricing structure, where firms can buy packages for all their staff to be trained in more detail on particular compliance matters, either by attending the webinar or receiving a recording.

We are grateful to everyone who continues to support our training programme by attending the webinars and courses or by sharing the information we send out on individual sessions so that it reaches a wider audience. Please keep checking the monthly newsletter and the website to stay up to date with what's going on.

JEANETTE LACY SCOTT

REPORT OF THE SOCIAL & NETWORKING EVENTS COMMITTEE

The Society's 'social year' always begins following the AGM in the Autumn and 2022 was no different with a group of members who attended the AGM staying on to enjoy drinks and dinner at the Pump House in Brighton. This is a great opportunity every year for members to meet with the office holders and some committee members old and new. Marking the beginning of new terms of office, there is always much enthusiasm and positivity around and we all leave on a 'high' with our plans for the year ahead.

The Managing Partners' Networking group met (virtually) in January where Pam Loch from Loch Associates gave a most informative and interesting presentation on remote and hybrid working, which included a discussion about menopause in employment which everyone found extremely useful.

It seems that members can never have enough quiz nights and in March we filled the Palm Court Restaurant on the Palace Pier where 22 teams battled it out to claim the coveted trophy! The new quizmaster handled the endless challenges with supreme patience and sharp wit – it is an unenviable task taking on a Bar of lawyers (what an appropriate collective noun). After a very tight contest, the team from Colemans Solicitors in Haywards Heath, aptly named 'Mustard' was victorious. [Leap](#) generously sponsored the evening and the raffle raised over £400 for the President's charity, the [Clocktower Sanctuary](#).

For numerous reasons (but mainly Eurovision!), the Society's annual ball was moved from its usual spot in May to Friday, 16th June. The decision to make it a Midsummer Masquerade Ball was very popular. On the night there were some stunning creations and it was so lovely to see everyone entering into the spirit of the evening. Once again, we had over 250 from our local legal community joining us at the Grand Hotel in Brighton. We are so grateful to our sponsors [Leap](#), [One Crown Office Row](#) and [Wellbeing at Work](#). Their generosity means that we are able to keep ticket prices down as much as possible and still enjoy things like fantastic live music, drinks receptions and the traditional photo booth. The icing on the cake this year were the inspired party bags provided by our President, the contents of which were used as disguise by the shy and performance aids by the more flamboyant!

Our Autumn Quiz in October had another great turnout. Tucking into fish and chips on the Palace Pier is such a wonderful Sussex seaside experience that we are now regular quizzers there! The 24 teams seemed even more competitive than ever and there were some extremely enthusiastic challenges – particularly from the barristers present it must be said! But clearly their challenges paid off and 'One COR Blimey', one of the teams from our amazing sponsors [One Crown Office Row](#) triumphed at the end of the evening.

The social events this year have raised over £2000 for the [Clocktower Sanctuary](#) which provides help in a crisis and a path out of homelessness for homeless 16-25 year olds in Brighton.

JEANETTE LACY SCOTT

SUSSEX JUNIOR LAWYERS DIVISION

The re-invigoration and re-establishing of the Sussex Junior Lawyers Division following the upheaval of the COVID-19 pandemic continues apace, in no small part thanks to our dedicated and hard-working committee. I give my thanks to each and every one of them for their ongoing commitment in rebuilding and reshaping the Sussex JLD to the benefit of junior lawyers in Sussex.

Our grand relaunch event held on 8 June at The Walrus in Brighton was at capacity, and my thanks to all who attended for making it a resounding success. As part of our 'JLD on the Road' initiative, we will be holding events in various locations throughout Sussex so there will be more opportunities to take part. Our last event was held on 5 October at The Libertine Social in Worthing, and our next event is tentatively scheduled for 30 November, at a venue TBC in Eastbourne. Following that, we plan to hold an event toward the north of the county, likely around the Crawley area. The feedback received from attendees so far indicates support for our plan to make the JLD less Brighton-centric, and more representative of Sussex as a whole.

Following an overhaul in our processes, we have now automated the membership list. It is now easier than ever to join, by following the link at sussexjld.co.uk/membership.html. We have secured domains and web hosting and should hope to have a website up in the near future. In the meantime, the JLD can be followed on the usual social channels such as LinkedIn, Instagram and Facebook.

Lastly, I will reaffirm that the Sussex JLD is what our membership makes it. We welcome ideas and suggestions how we can better support and represent you, our members. We can be contacted through our social channels as above, by email at sussexjld@gmail.com, or by following our survey link [here](#).

LAWRENCE CORR

SUSSEX LAW SOCIETY GOLF SOCIETY

It is nearly a hundred years since The Sussex Law Society Golf Society (“SLSGS”) was formed by a group of solicitors practising in Brighton. At that time Worthing and Eastbourne solicitors had their own golf societies and they competed with each other. In time, the popularity of SLSGS advanced northwards and many solicitors practising in Haywards Heath, Burgess Hill Hassocks and surrounding towns also joined. We held annual competitions with Kent and Hampshire Law Societies. Judges and barristers practising who appeared at the Lewes and Chichester Assizes and Quarter Sessions were often invited to participate in our matches and all had an enjoyable time. In its heyday, the SLSGS boasted upwards of 60 to 70 members.

In 1931, Mr. Recorder James Cassels, sitting at the Lewes Assizes proposed that SLSGS arrange a match for ALL the users of the Court i.e., barristers, barristers’ clerks, solicitors and their managing clerks, policemen, prison officers, probation and all other staff employed in the courts. He donated a cup called the Cassels Cup.

The event was a great success. Apart from a lull during WW2, the SLSGS has held an annual competition in honour of Recorder Cassels and the names of many prominent practitioners are engraved on this historic prize. The cup was won by Mick Barry earlier this year.

Other annual competitions held by SLSGS are no less important. In 1951, solicitor David Bunker of Bunker & Co of Brighton arranged a SLSGS match and donated a prize known as The Necessity Bowl – with the far-sighted caption “Necessity Recognises No Law”. This is a wonderful trophy and the names of many prominent solicitors - past and present - are engraved on this popular cup. The current holder of this cup is David Harris.

Until a few years ago, we used to hold an inter society competition involving Law Societies from Sussex, Kent and Hampshire and the prize was a cup known as “The Perkins Cup” donated by James Perkins, the senior partner of Mayo & Perkins of Eastbourne. In recent years it has become harder for some of the other societies to raise a team, with declining younger members and travel becoming harder for the older members.

The SLSGS decided to replace The Perkins Cup with a new cup called “The Mea Culpa Cup” but have not arranged this competition for some time.

Our captain – Michael Harris – holds a match annually at Seaford Head. It is very popular and great day out.

We used to hold at least one match against the Banks when some eager diehards of the banking profession (mostly retired) loved to compete with us. Similarly, there is often a challenge from the Estate Agents and we enjoyed the thought of beating them! Regrettably these matches have been discontinued as bank managers have ceased to exist and estate agents are busy!!

I hope the above inspires the readers of the Sussex Law Society Annual Report to join our Golf Society and to participate in our very friendly matches, whatever the standard of your golf.

I hope to send out invitations for our matches early next year.

PAUL SAGOO

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SUSSEX LAW SOCIETY
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 3RD NOVEMBER 2022 AT 6.00 PM
UPSTAIRS AT THE PUMP HOUSE, 46 MARKET STREET, BRIGHTON, BN1 1HH**

Present: The President, and 12 members.

1. Apologies were received from 6 members whose names were read at the meeting.
2. The minutes of the AGM held on 3rd November, 2021 were accepted as a true record. Proposed by Mr Maxwell-Jones and seconded by Mr J Bradshaw with all present in favour.

3. Matters Arising

None.

4. Report of the General Committee for 2021/22 and Annual Accounts for the year ending 31/08/2022

It was proposed that the above report and accounts be accepted. Proposer: Ms E Weir. Seconded by: Ms E Richards with all present in favour.

5. Election of Officers

Formal elections then took place as follows:

President: **Mr O Maxwell-Jones** (proposed by Ms L Tarrant and seconded by Ms G Tisshaw with all present in favour)

Vice-President: **Ms Manjinder Nagra** (proposed by Ms E Richards and seconded by Ms J Hardaway with all present in favour)

Hon. Secretary: **Ms E Richards** (proposed by Ms E Weir and seconded by Mr L Corr with all present in favour)

Hon. Treasurer: **Mr O Maxwell-Jones** (proposed by Ms E Weir and seconded by Mr J Bradshaw with all present in favour)

6. Election of General Committee Members:

Ms S O'Sullivan (proposed by Mr D Dickson and seconded by Mr O Maxwell-Jones with all present in favour).

7. President's Address

Mr Maxwell-Jones expressed his gratitude to Ms Tarrant for extending her term of office. He said that, with the help of an excellent committee, she had steered the Society through the strangest of times and helped it to continue to support its members through the pandemic and remain a viable organisation.

He said that when he first came to Brighton he joined the Society to meet people and, grateful for everything the Society has given him over the years, he was happy to give something back and hold the office of President for a second time.

Mr Maxwell-Jones said that he would be supporting the [Clocktower Sanctuary](#) throughout the year as his nominated President's charity.

8. Any Other Business

None.