

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Happy New Year to all and welcome to the January edition of the Sussex Law Society Newsletter. I hope everyone had a restful break.

What a start to the new year already – multiple solicitors rewarded for decades of hard work in the New Years Honours list, Storm Henk causing havoc, more strikes and the hint of a general election! Like many of you, I watched the recent dramatisation of the Post Office Scandal. I recall the Guildford Four and the Birmingham Six convictions being overturned in the 80's and never thought that 20 plus years on we would see more miscarriages of justice on such a widespread scale. The victims deserve for their stories to be told. It's a difficult watch but one I would highly recommend.

As mentioned previously, I will be holding a virtual "President's Surgery" on Tuesday 23 January 2024 between 17.00-19.00 on a first come first served basis for any member wishing to raise any issues/concerns or wanting to meet me if they would like. If this is of interest, [please let me know](#) and I will send you an MS teams invite nearer the time.

There is plenty to look forward to in 2024 and not least, our Spring Quiz on 18 April 2024 and Summer Ball on 7 June 2024 (details below) both of which are expected to be popular sell out events.

Finally, I would like to extend my thanks to the Hangleton and Knoll Multi Cultural Women's Group who invited me to their year-end celebration on 14 December. 2023. It was lovely to see so many women from all walks of life coming together and celebrating their similarities and cultural differences and there being such a sense of community.

*Manjinder Nagra*

## NEWS

- **Cognitive Law** is delighted to welcome their newest Consultant Solicitor, **Alistair Rustemeyer** to the team. Alistair is a Litigation Solicitor based in Brighton, specialising in Contentious Probate. As a member of the Association of Contentious Trust and Probate Specialists (ACTAPS) Alistair advises clients in all aspects of contentious trust and probate including wills and inheritance disputes.
- **Westgate Chambers** are delighted to announce that **Maria Hancock** CI Arb, has been shortlisted for 'Barrister of the Year' at The British Family Law Awards 2024. Maria's shortlisting for Barrister of the Year, is recognition for the stellar reputation she has earned when instructed on some of the most complex and sensitive Family Law matters. Maria, a Family Law Specialist with nearly 30 years' experience at the Bar, is also an accredited Arbitrator (Children).
- **Bate & Albon** are delighted to announce that **Alison Moore** has joined them as a Paralegal within the firm's Landlord & Tenant team. She will be based in their Eastbourne Office.
- **Loch Associates Group** is pleased to welcome a new Partner to their team: **Victoria Regan**. Victoria is a Leading Individual in both Employment Law and HR, with an outstanding reputation for excellent service. Victoria will be based in Loch Associate Group's new Eastbourne office, located opposite the Marina, which opened its doors at the start of January.

- **Coole Bevis LLP** has strengthened their specialist national Residential Leasehold Department with the appointment of **Adam Davis**. Adam joined the firm as a Partner in December 2023 having previously headed up a successful leasehold team at a boutique central London firm. Since qualifying in 2017, Adam has specialised in the highly niche area of Leasehold Enfranchisement law and brings a wealth of experience representing both landlord and tenant clients in all areas of enfranchisement.
- **Martin Searle Solicitors** are looking for tenants for the lower ground floor of their five-storey period building (418 sq. ft). The recently reduced property is situated on Marlborough Place overlooking the revamped Jubilee Gardens. The two offices, plus a middle room for copying/scanning, are a good size and can be accessed via a separate street access. There are shared kitchen and WC facilities. For more information please [click here](#).
- **Elissa Da Costa-Waldman** MCI Arb joins **Westgate Chambers** as a Door Tennant. Since her call to the Bar in 1990, Elissa has become an established practitioner in Financial Remedies, TOLATA and Child Arrangements. Using a creative and innovative approach to finding solutions to client's financial matters on divorce, she is also an experienced and principled negotiator as well as an assertive and effective advocate, being National Institute of Trial Advocacy (NITA) trained. Elissa is an experienced Mediator having qualified in 2003, a qualified Collaborative Lawyer and, as of June 2012, she is also an accredited Family Law Arbitrator (Finance).

#### BOOK NOW FOR OUR SPRING QUIZ NIGHT

[Book here](#) for our extremely popular Quiz Night, which has kindly been sponsored by 1 Crown Office Row, will be once again held in the Palm Court Restaurant on Brighton Pier on Thursday, 18<sup>th</sup> April so why not come and join us (we promise no legal questions!). Both members and non-members are welcome to enter a team of up to 6 people at a cost of £25 per person (including VAT) which includes a fish and chip supper (with a vegan fishless and chip supper alternative). There will be a cash bar available all night. This is a very popular event and so places will be allocated on a first come first served basis. There will be a raffle on the night in aid of the President's charity for the year – [The Black & Minority Ethnic Young People's Project](#)



#### CIVIL JUSTICE COUNCIL CONSULTATION ON PROCEDURE FOR DETERMINING MENTAL CAPACITY

The Civil Justice Council has published a consultation on Procedure for Determining Mental Capacity in Civil Proceedings which will run for 3 months until 17 March 2024 at 23:59. Read the full consultation paper [online here](#). Responses should be submitted by PDF or word document to [CJCCapacityConsultation@judiciary.uk](mailto:CJCCapacityConsultation@judiciary.uk) Please use the cover sheet which can be downloaded [here](#).

As part of the consultation process, there will be a seminar in early 2024. Please fill in the following form to register your interest: <https://forms.office.com/e/QK04WXLwZG>

### DAVID BUCK R.I.P.

Bishop and Light Solicitors are deeply saddened to share the news of the untimely and sudden death of David Buck last week.

David was admitted in 1987. More recently he worked as a consultant at the firm having previously worked with the late Keith Arscott at Arscotts and as David Buck & Co in Brighton. His partner, Jo McWilliam, may also be known to members as a solicitor and immigration judge. David practised for over 30 years in Criminal Law, mostly as a defence Solicitor but also prosecuting on behalf of the RSPCA. David's Duty Solicitor PIN was 11 - meaning that he was in the very first cohort of Duty Solicitors when the scheme was formed in the late 1980s. Now Duty Solicitor PINs exceed 15000. He served on schemes in Brighton and Eastbourne throughout his career. He loved the law and said recently that he would never retire because he enjoyed working so much.

David was extremely popular amongst colleagues in the advocates room and coffee bars of the Criminal courts of Sussex and a much-loved member of this firm. Away from the Law David loved sea swimming, walking his lurcher on the downs and music. He was an accomplished guitarist and could rarely resist popping into the legendary Record Album shop near Brighton Station to pick up some more vinyl to add to his collection. We shall all miss his infectious smile and bellicose laugh.

Our thoughts are with Jo and his sons Henry and James.

### GET YOUR HOUSE IN ORDER WITH REGARDS TO ANTI MONEY LAUNDERING TRAINING – THE SRA ARE COMING!!

The SRA has said that their AML and Sanctions inspections are underway now for 2024 and they are now scoping out the next thematic review which is on AML training. The Legal Sector Affinity Group (LSAG) guidance states that “you should take a risk-based approach to determining how often specific role-based AML training should take place, although some form of high-level basic AML awareness/refresher training should be taken annually across all relevant employees”

These are the facts so, now is the time to get your house in order with regards to AML training. **We are holding a 3-hour update/refresher session online which will take place on Tuesday 23rd January 2024 from 10.00am – 1.00pm**, presented by Joanna Morris. This session will cover all that's new in the world of AML and refresh everyone on the key points of the MLR2017. The session will be suitable for all members of staff in your firm and give them the annual refresher required under the LSAG guidance.

You can register as an individual or, for one flat rate fee, register & update all your staff in one go! The application form giving full details of what the session will cover can be accessed [here](#).

### COMPLIANCE AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Firms which had ignored the SRA Notices and assistance in respect of non-compliance with its Transparency Rules were, at the end of the year, issued with the first “name and shame” £750 fixed penalties. Live further cases will follow and if those who have been fined still continue to fail to put things right, they could potentially face a further penalty of £1,500! During this same period, four figure fines ( based on turnover ) began to appear in respect of breaches of each of the five key AML Statutory and Regulatory requirements and failure to have in place compliance policies, controls and procedures to mitigate and manage risk.

In the meantime, itself under pressure from Government and consumer lobbies, the Legal Services Board - the oversight regulator, is currently consulting on the next two years' business plan and proposed budget. The priorities include strengthening the performance of its legal regulators now, alongside the recently announced independent review of the SRA's intervention into Axiom Ince ( the result expected this Spring), its demand for agreed Undertakings in the CILEX dispute and any consultations for the necessary approval relating to efforts to widen their remit.

As for LeO, it appears that streamlining its early resolution scheme rules last April is beginning to make inroads into its eight-month backlog and speeding up early settlements.

Reminder- Early bird discounts are still available for the annual single day [Law Society Risk and Compliance Conference](#) on 21st March.

*Patrick Richards.*

### **FAMILY MEDIATION WEEK 22-26 JANUARY 2024**

1. The strongest predictor of the divorcing couples using mediation was having used a lawyer: '28 per cent of those using a lawyer tried mediation, compared with just 11 per cent of those who had not.' Fair Shares? Research <https://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/project/fair-shares-sorting-out-money-and-property-on-divorce>
2. The government continues to support mediation with its MOJ £500 voucher towards costs and its recent survey; the scheme has helped more than 19,000 couples in mediation.
3. Part 3 of the Family Proceedings Rules – the court has wide powers to encourage non-court processes like mediation.

So now is as good a time as any to get with the tide that's turned towards non court processes. There is a huge variety of free one-hour seminars throughout the week and you can find the events and timetable [here](#). The variety of what's on offer for lawyers is boggling. From Language in our letters, to self-care, to working with neutrals, how to use Arbitration with mediation, how to work with divorce coaches...the list goes on. That's an amazing 23 hours of free professional development; all available on the Family Mediation Council's website after the event. But hopefully some of you will join 'live'.

On 23<sup>rd</sup> January – Jo O'Sullivan and Louisa Whitney, will tackle 'Everything Lawyers Always Wanted to Know About Mediation\* (\* But Were Afraid To Ask) not quite in homage to Woody Allen's film of a similar name. If you aren't sure what mediation is and how you can support it (and still make a living) then you'll enjoy this seminar.

### **BOOK NOW AND GET YOUR 'EARLY BIRD' DISCOUNT FOR THE SUMMER BALL**

We have started planning our Summer Charity Ball which will be held on Friday, 7<sup>th</sup> June at the Grand Hotel in Brighton. The Ball is open to both members and non-members and is the perfect opportunity to entertain partners, colleagues, staff, clients and business connections all in one evening and raise funds for the President's charity – [The Black & Minority Ethnic Young People's Project](#). The Ball is the only local event of its kind for members of the profession and all those who make up and are associated with the local legal community. With great food, wine and live music, it is always a brilliant evening so, if you have never been before, why not come along! Exclusive tables seat a minimum of 8 and a maximum of 12 but if you are a smaller group or wish to come alone that is no problem at all - we will accommodate you on a mixed table.

Tickets for the Ball can be purchased at the ‘early bird’ rate of £90 + vat (£90 including vat for trainees and members of the Sussex JLD and individual members who are not VAT registered) if booked and paid for before 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. After that tickets will be the full price of £95 + VAT (£95 including vat for trainees and members of the Sussex JLD and individual members who are not VAT registered). The application form can be downloaded from the website [here](#).

More details about the night to follow .....

## COUNCIL MEMBER’S REPORT

The Law Society Council met in the Council Chamber at the Law Society, Chancery Lane on 13th December 2023. This was the first meeting hosted by the new president, Nick Emmerson. Various matters were on the agenda and I highlight the following:

### AI and the legal profession.

A working group has been convened to establish how best the Law Society can assist members deal with the impact of artificial intelligence on legal practice, an issue some feel many of us underestimate. In particular attention is given to “generative AI”, a subcategory of AI that uses deep learning algorithms to generate new outputs based on large quantities of existing or synthetic (artificially created) input data. This might be used to create legal arguments or generate documents. The Working Group consists of experts in AI and technological innovation within the legal sector who will share their perspective using AI within their practices to help inform how the Law Society helps member firms. The remaining membership includes SME and in-house members, stakeholder and membership organisations, and researchers. The inaugural meeting was held on 6th November, and was chaired by the Law Society CEO, Ian Jeffery.

It occurred to me that AI is nothing new. In 1997 a computer, Deep Blue, beat Gary Kasparov, a Grand-Master, at chess. By my reckoning, Deep Blue was artificial but also pretty smart. It may be that this is evolution rather than revolution but it is happening at an extraordinarily rapid pace and, the experts are sure, will have a significant impact upon the delivery of legal services in the very near future – hence the intent of the Law Society to take this very seriously. I shall update members as the learning evolves.

### The future of 60 Carey Street, a building owned by the Law Society and used as the President’s London residence, but which is in need of renovation.

Nick Emerson gave those of us that have never visited this building a guided tour. It is a town-house type building in Carey Street, around the corner from 113 Chancery Lane and opposite the rear of the Royal Courts of Justice. It is in parts extremely elegant with wood panelled dining and reception rooms. There is a flat at the top that has very “tired” decoration, but which is used as the President’s London residence. Other parts are in need some serious repair. A few will have less fond memories of the place – it was previously used by the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal. Apparently if a Solicitor was struck off, they went out of the back door, otherwise they had the privilege of going back out through the front!

The decision for Council, on behalf of members, is whether to sell the building or renovate and keep it. For my part, having seen it, I am in favour of keeping it. It will need money spent on it but is a heritage asset of the Society and once renovated can be put to use both as accommodation for the President but more importantly to host meetings and dinners. More than one former President of

the Society has emphasised the importance of such gatherings to exert influence, in an informal setting, upon those with influence over matters impacting our profession.

This President is determined to reach a conclusion on the issue during his term, it having been avoided in recent years.

#### Axiom Ince

You will be aware that the SRA has intervened in this firm. It appears that there is a staggering £66m hole in its client account and it will be for the SRA and, ultimately, the profession to plug this. How that happens is a matter of great concern to the Law Society which is watching developments with a keen eye.

#### The future make up of The Law Society Council

This is kept under constant review. There are currently 97 seats. There is a view that this should be cut but this may require us Turkeys to vote for Christmas! It is unclear where the cut would come – to interest group or to geographical seats. I shall, if necessary, fight hard to ensure that Sussex retains its seat and resist any attempts to merge it with neighbouring seats.

*Andrew Bishop*

*LS Council Member for Sussex*

[Andrew.bishop@bishopandlight.co.uk](mailto:Andrew.bishop@bishopandlight.co.uk)

#### THE SUSSEX JLD ARE LOOKING FOR SPONSORS

We are delighted that the Sussex JLD are back in action following their relaunch last year and thanks must go to Lawrence Corr and the committee for their hard work in making this happen! They have organised a couple of events which have been extremely popular and oversubscribed and have plans for more in 2024. If you are interested in sponsoring and supporting the JLD in their efforts to bring young lawyers together please email [Lawrence Corr](mailto:Lawrence.Corr).

Anyone who would like to subscribe to the Sussex JLD mailing list can do so [here](#)

#### SUSSEX LAW SOCIETY WEBINARS AND COURSES

Click on the links below for more details about these webinars and the application forms:

23<sup>rd</sup> January, 2024 – [‘Anti Money Laundering Training – The SRA are coming!!’](#) 10am – 1pm. Live Webinar by Joanna Morris. Register as an individual or, for one flat rate fee, register & update all your staff in one go!

13<sup>th</sup> February, 2024 – [‘CDD & Identifying Documents – is it real or is it fake?’](#). 12noon – 1pm. Live Webinar by Joanna Morris

29<sup>th</sup> February, 2024 – [‘Attract, Engage & Retain more of your ideal clients’](#). 12.30pm – 1.30pm. Live Webinar by Rachel Tombs

21<sup>st</sup> March, 2024 – [‘Civil Procedure Update’](#). 9.30 – 12.30. Live Webinar by Professor Dominic Regan.

#### OTHER COURSES/WEBINARS/ARTICLES/RESOURCES

**‘How to create the most eye-catching and compelling advert design and copy for lawyers’** – Well-placed adverts are a powerful part of marketing a law firm, but it is crucial that the design and copy

are spot on. Orion Legal Marketing take a look at how to put together a compelling static advert and what you should be telling the reader about your business. Read the full article [here](#).

**Throughout January 2024, Martin Searle Solicitors** are running their new campaign, **Menopause Matters** to stamp out menopause discrimination in the workplace. Martin Searle Solicitors were praised in the latest Legal 500 listings for their campaigning work and expertise around discrimination in the workplace. They are offering a free 30-minute telephone advice line for employers and employees concerned about menopause discrimination and employer duties. As part of the campaign, they are running a free virtual seminar for employee advisers and trade union representatives on 25 January 2024 covering **'Menopause Discrimination At Work'**, They are also running a seminar in association with Community Works for managers at charities and non-profit organisations on **'Menopause Discrimination – Best Practice for Employers'** on Tuesday 30 January 2024. To find out more, [click here](#).

**Pregnancy & Maternity Discrimination – Best Practice update for HR Managers & Employment Lawyers**– Laura Donnelly at Martin Searle Solicitors is running a virtual live webinar, in partnership with MBL Seminars, which offers best practice employment law advice to avoid discriminating against pregnant women and those on maternity leave. This interactive session includes working through practical case studies and runs from **1.30pm – 3pm on Tuesday 30 January 2024**. For more information and to book your place, [click here](#).

**Paying for Care & Securing Funding Masterclass** - Cate Searle, Head of Community Care Law at Martin Searle Solicitors is hosting a live seminar in London in partnership with MBL Seminars. This practical and tactical session is designed for professional deputy and private client law teams who have a working knowledge of the health and social care funding systems and want to know how to run successful public law challenges that make a difference for their clients. This full-day interactive workshop will run from **9.30am – 5.15pm on Monday 19 February 2024**. For more information and to book your place, [click here](#).

## SUSSEX LAW SOCIETY GOLF SOCIETY

The Sussex Law Society Golf Society is open to anyone with connections with the legal profession, whether you are in practice or retired, whatever your standard of play. There is no joining fee. If you wish to join our Society all you have to do is contact me by email or telephone. Email: Paul Sagoo [rps.sagoo@googlemail.com](mailto:rps.sagoo@googlemail.com)

*Paul Sagoo*  
*Secretary, SLSGS*

## ARE YOU UP FOR A CHALLENGE IN 2024?

This year, you could do something amazing for our community's most vulnerable, providing them with life changing specialist free legal advice. Have you ever wanted to run a marathon, take on an obstacle course, or even skydive? Now you can while, at the same time, raising funds for the [London Legal Support Trust](#) which supports frontline free legal advice agencies.

See all the challenging events planned for this year [here](#). Why not make one of your New Year's Resolutions to rise to the challenge and go the extra mile for justice in 2024!

## SITUATIONS VACANT

Listing job vacancies in the Newsletter & putting more detailed vacancies on the [website](#) is FREE for Sussex Law Society member firms and individual members and £100 + VAT for other contributors. Contact [Jeanette Lacy Scott](#) to place an advert. More details about each vacancy and how to apply can be found by following the highlighted links.

**Completions/Post Completions Assistant** - A leading mid-Sussex firm are looking for someone to join our small, dynamic team with a supportive ethos, to assist in the completion and registration of legal transactions. Candidates should have excellent time management, organisational and IT skills and should also be able to work under pressure. For more details see [here](#).

**Court of Protection Health & Welfare/Mental Capacity Lawyer** - Martin Searle Solicitors are looking for an experienced person to join their Community Care Law team. For a full job description and to apply, please click [here](#).

**Employment Lawyer, Legal Executive or Case Worker** - Martin Searle Solicitors are looking to recruit an experienced person to join their Employment Law team. For a full job description and to apply, please [click here](#).

**Private Client Assistant** - Christmas Ogden Solicitors in Lewes are currently looking for an experienced Private Client Assistant to join us on a full/part time basis. You must be experienced in the preparation/drafting of Wills, Lasting Powers of Attorney and Estate Administration including completion of IHT forms. For more information about the role see [here](#).

**Private Client Solicitor/Practitioner** - Christmas Ogden Solicitors are currently looking for an experienced Private Client Solicitor/Probate Practitioner to join us on a Consultancy / Part Time basis. We are looking to grow our current existing caseload so this position may become full-time in the future. We run a small and very friendly office in Lewes and are looking for someone to join us who is experienced in the preparation of Wills, Lasting Powers of Attorney and Estate Administration. If interested, please send your CV and covering email to [Sonia@christmasogden.co.uk](mailto:Sonia@christmasogden.co.uk)

**Private Client Executive/Solicitor** – Miller Parris in Broadwater, Worthing are seeking an experienced Private Client practitioner to include administering estates, preparation of wills and powers of attorney and related issues. For more information and how to apply see [here](#).

**Private Client Executive** – Hart Reade LLP are seeking to recruit a Private Client Executive to join our busy team. Applicants will ideally need to have at least 2 years PQE as a Solicitor or Chartered Legal Executive. Candidates will need to be technically sound, with a practical and up to date knowledge of private client law. See [here](#) for more details and how to apply.

**Property Lawyer** - Hart Reade LLP has an exciting opportunity for a full time Property Lawyer to join our busy practice. This is a senior position and applicants will ideally need to have at least 3 years PQE as a Solicitor or Chartered Legal Executive. For more details and how to apply see [here](#).

**Residential Property Paralegal/Assistant** - A leading mid-Sussex law firm has a vacancy within its Residential Property Department for a Paralegal/Assistant. Candidates should be organised, self-motivated and able to work as part of a small, dynamic team with a supportive ethos. See [here](#) for more details.



If you would like to be added to the list of locums published monthly in this Newsletter, please email your details to [Jeanette Lacy Scott](mailto:Jeanette.Lacy.Scott) . Listing your details here is free of charge for members:

- Margaret Dowdles - commercial/residential property. Happy to discuss how firms can practically work together so she can innovate on pricing and still deliver real value at this challenging time and going forwards -Contact [mgtdles@gmail.com](mailto:mgtdles@gmail.com) 07947-771593. Charges realistic rates.
- Patrick Richards- Un-Notarised legal translations, office and Court interpreter services offered by fluent French and Italian speaking local Solicitor. Contact [patrichards27@hotmail.com](mailto:patrichards27@hotmail.com) 07715928563.
- Patrick Rusk – Patrick Rusk – Legal Translation Services – Trainee Solicitor and Member of Chartered Institute of Linguists (CIOL no. 55485) offering legal translation services from German, French and Spanish into English. For all enquiries, please email [patrick.rusk@hotmail.com](mailto:patrick.rusk@hotmail.com) or text +44 7534 747667.

### LOST & MISSING WILLS

Do you hold a will for the following:

Mrs Caroline SCHOFIELD      DOB: 30/06/1972      Last address is 32 Wisden Avenue, Burgess Hill, RH15 8TL      Any information to James Schofield [jameschofield @hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jameschofield@hotmail.co.uk) and Lydia Schofield [lydiaschofield60@gmail.com](mailto:lydiaschofield60@gmail.com)

All wills previously held by Howlett Clarke are now safely held with the Right Legal Group, Wyvern Business Park, 16 Stanier Way, Derby, DE21 6BF. Telephone number 01332 424511.

Please contact [Jeanette Lacy Scott](mailto:Jeanette.Lacy.Scott) if you are looking for a will or if you want to be part of our lost/missing wills scheme (free of charge for members)

### LAW SOCIETY DIVISIONS/NETWORKS

The Law Society has some really useful divisions/networks full of information and resources which are worth exploring. The links are here: [Ethnic Minority Lawyers](#); [In-house Lawyers](#); [Junior Lawyers](#); [Lawyers with Disabilities](#); [LGBT+ Lawyers](#); [Small Firms](#); [Solicitor Judges](#); [Women Lawyers](#)

### SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE

Following the introduction of the new GDPR laws on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018, if you are not an individual or corporate member of the Sussex Law Society and wish to continue to receive this monthly newsletter you will need to [opt in here](#). If you are unsure about whether you are/are not a member, please contact [Jeanette Lacy Scott](mailto:Jeanette.Lacy.Scott)

If you would like to receive information about courses and events in any of the following areas of law, please sign up to one of the following lists:

[Litigators List](#)

[Private Client Practitioners List](#)

[Property Practitioners List](#)

[Family Practitioners List](#)

[Criminal Law Practitioners List](#)