

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Welcome to the latest edition of the SLS newsletter! I hope those who celebrated had a wonderful St. David's Day last Friday.

As International Women's Day approaches on 8th March, the theme of which is #InspireInclusion - let's celebrate the achievements of women in the legal profession while acknowledging the ongoing work needed for gender equality. Despite progress, disparities persist in pay, leadership roles, and opportunities. This year let's renew our commitment to promoting diversity, equity and inclusion within our firms and the broader legal community. Let's advocate for change, support one another and amplify the voices of women, especially those from marginalised groups. My hope is that together we can build a more inclusive and equitable legal profession for all.

Talking of inclusion and celebrating diversity, based on my love of film, I am thrilled to announce this year's theme for our summer charity ball is 'Bollywood'! Adding to the excitement, alongside our traditional live band, we'll be treated to a spectacular Bhangra Dance performance featuring Dholi (traditional Indian drummers). The dress code will be black tie or optional dress to support the theme. You don't need to worry about buying a new outfit – a bright suit, dress, sari, cummerbund, tie, scarf or “bindi” on your forehead will do the trick and there are lots of easy ideas you can search up online or feel free to drop me a line for any. The Sussex Law Society Bollywood Ball will take place on Friday 7th June, at the Grand Hotel, Brighton. This event is open to both members and non-members. Don't forget to book by the end of March to snag your early bird discount! [You can find more details here.](#)

Applications for the [Law Society's Access Scheme](#) are now open for 2024. This scheme has helped around 300 aspiring solicitors from disadvantaged backgrounds enter the profession. If you know anyone who dreams of becoming a solicitor but lacks funding, industry contacts, or opportunities, encourage them to apply.

In other exciting news, congratulations are in order for Michael Walker at 1 Crown Office Row for his recent appointment as a Deputy District Judge.

Lou Earp of Denton Gregory Solicitors, whom I had the pleasure of meeting during my recent visit to the University of Chichester, will be hosting a free webinar on the basics of using LinkedIn. Mark your calendars for Thursday, April 25th, from 12-1pm. This session is free for members and you can find more details [here](#).

Finally, I was truly impressed to learn about the invaluable work being done by the University of Brighton Legal Clinic, offering pro bono advice to our community. I had the pleasure of meeting with Clinic director, Jane Woods, to discuss their work. Jane emphasised how clinical legal education benefits students by providing practical experience, fostering mentoring relationships between students, academics, and local legal practitioners and, most importantly, serving our community where legal advice is often inaccessible. These benefits are further illuminated in the article by final year law student Isha, featured later in this Newsletter. A big thank you to all the lawyers across Sussex who generously dedicate their time to support pro bono projects like this. The Clinic is expanding rapidly and is seeking additional legal support, particularly from housing, family, and employment lawyers. If you're able to volunteer approximately 20 hours between November and April, please reach out to Jane Woods or email brightonlegalclinic@brighton.ac.uk for details.

Manjinder Nagra

NEWS

- **Tisshaws Family Law Solicitors** are delighted to welcome 2 new recruits to the Haywards Heath office. **Esra Agirbas** joins from Gowan & Stevens, having qualified as a solicitor in July 2023. Driven by a long-held desire to help people during times of huge emotional upheaval, Esra is a strong believer in resolving matters in the most cost-effective and amicable way possible. As a result, her plans include training as a Family Mediator. A fluent Turkish speaker, she will be able to advise members of the Turkish community on divorce and separation issues. Newly qualified in January 2024, **Charlotte deCecco** joins us from England & Derbyshire LLP. Attracted by our ethos of providing legal expertise within a culture of care, Charlotte is keen to develop her experience and build a career within the family law sector.
- **Healys** is thrilled to announce that **Nicholas Taylor**, Head of Tech and Media, has been individually recognised in this year's Spear's 500 directory, and ranked as a Recommended Lawyer in the 2024 Reputation & Privacy index. Based in our Brighton office, this accreditation underscores Nicholas's unwavering commitment to excellence in media law, defamation and reputation management and his profound impact on the legal profession.
- **Bate & Albon** are delighted to announce the appointment of two experienced Residential Property Solicitors as follows: **Paula Williams** has joined as a Partner and is based at the firm's Eastbourne Office and **Harry Tuke** has joined as a Consultant and is based at the firm's Brighton Office.
- Family law specialist **Craig Yeung-Williams** joins the growing **Family Law Partners** Brighton team on 4th March from Rix & Kay. A member of Resolution and an Accredited Specialist in the fields of Private Children and Complex Financial Remedy cases, Craig advises on complex children disputes including those involving allegations of domestic abuse and parental alienation, special guardianship orders and applications to relocate. He also has significant experience in resolving financial matters on divorce involving business assets, inherited assets, trust assets and overseas properties.
- **Healys** are pleased to announce that **Robert Johnson**, Partner and Head of Professional Negligence, has been named this year's winner of the Client Choice Award for Professional Negligence. Robert Johnson is a leading practitioner in his field and has been recommended in both Legal 500 and Chambers & Partners for many years. His practice is driven by results, winning more than 95% of client claims.
- Throughout March 2024, **Martin Searle Solicitors** are running their 19th annual campaign, Mind the Bump to stamp out pregnancy and maternity discrimination in the workplace. They are offering a free 30-minute telephone advice line for employers and employees concerned about pregnancy and maternity rights and employers' duties. The campaign involves a virtual seminar for employers in the charity and non-profit sector on 'Pregnancy and Maternity Discrimination – Best Practice for Employers' which takes place on Thursday 14 March 2024. They are also running a free virtual workshop for employee advisers and trade union representatives - 'Pregnancy and Maternity Discrimination – A Guide for Advisers' on Thursday 21 March 2024. For more details click [here](#).

'EARLY BIRD' DISCOUNT FOR OUR SUMMER 'BOLLYWOOD' BALL TICKETS IF BOOKED BEFORE THE END OF MARCH!

Our Summer Charity Ball will be held on Friday, 7th June at the Grand Hotel in Brighton and we are offering an 'early bird' discount 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 31st 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](#).

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 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.

As our President announced in her report above we are, this year, celebrating inclusion and diversity with a 'Bollywood' theme! Alongside our live band [Xcaliber](#), there will be a spectacular Bhangra Dance performance featuring Dholi (traditional Indian drummers). The dress code will be black tie or optional dress to support the theme.

UNIVERSITY OF BRIGHTON'S LAW CLINIC

"From the outset, I felt supported and encouraged by them and they gave me the confidence to keep going with the case. Their professionalism was excellent, but they were also caring and interested - exactly the right tone."

I'm Isha Sharma, a final year law student at the University of Brighton and these words were shared with my student group by our most recent client. For me, they encapsulate the essence of my experience as a student clinician—a journey filled with warmth, understanding, and genuine connection.

The University of Brighton's Law Clinic, led by academic and practising solicitor Jane Woods, offers pro bono legal guidance for our local community. Final year and postgraduate law students work on cases under the supervision of academics and practitioner volunteers. Our volunteers come from a number of organisations including Sussex-based 1 Crown Office Row, Edward Harte Solicitors and Knights Plc. From navigating family disputes to addressing housing issues, our doors are open wide, welcoming individuals facing diverse legal challenges.

My time at the Clinic has been about more than just providing legal advice: it's been about embracing the human experience with open arms. I've had the privilege of witnessing the profound impact of empathy and the power that listening holds, firsthand. I've found that simply sitting down and acknowledging someone's troubles, has the power to uplift spirits and lighten burdens.

As students we are assisted by the invaluable guidance of our supervisors, who share not just their expertise but also the lessons learned from their practice, enriching our understanding and equipping us to navigate cases with compassion. With each interaction, we foster positive change in the lives of those we are privileged to assist.

I am filled with gratitude for the opportunity to be part of something truly special. I extend a heartfelt invitation to all lawyers who share our passion for making a difference, to become a part of Clinic. In particular, if you are a housing or employment lawyer, please get in touch! Volunteering is flexible and requires the minimum commitment of approx. 20 hours over the period November-April of each year. If you'd like to be a part of Clinic, please reach out to Jane Woods on LinkedIn or email brightonlegalclinic@brighton.ac.uk

'WHAT'S ON YOUR WEBSITE? SRA TRANSPARENCY RULES' WEBINAR IN MARCH

Joanna Morris is presenting this 1-hour lunchtime webinar for the Society from 12noon – 1pm on Tuesday, 26th March. At only £30 + VAT for members (£40 + VAT for non-members) this offers excellent value and a chance to get right up to date with all that's happening around this subject.

Press releases last year indicated that the SRA is intent on taking a 'more robust approach' ensuring law firm compliance with the Transparency Rules which came into force four years ago and form part of the SRA Standards and Regulations. On top of that the SRA states that it will 'utilise the proposed new fining powers as part of this enforcement exercise'. This has now started as in November 2023 the SRA issued their first fixed penalty fines for breaches of the Transparency Rules. The SRA are in the process of reviewing the websites of 2,500 law firms who signed a declaration in August 2021 stating that they were complying with the rules. They have already reviewed over 500 of those law firms with the results indicating a 'continued low level of full compliance'. So, what is on your website in relation to the Transparency Rules? Is the information on it correct and up to date? Does it include all the information required? Do your staff know what's on the website when dealing with clients?

Your name may be next on the SRA list for review! Act now! Full details about what the webinar will cover can be found on the downloadable application form [here](#).

'What's on your Website? SRA Transparency Rules' is the first in a series of 8 lunchtime one-hour webinars the Sussex Law Society is holding every two weeks between March and July on some of the most important areas of compliance for law firms. These 'stand-alone' sessions will keep you up to date with any new updates being released by the SRA and others. The cost of attending the whole series in £200 + VAT. More details can be found [here](#).

COUNCIL MEMBER'S REPORT

Tuesday 27th February saw the 2024 Strategic Planning Event (SPE) held at Law Society (TLS) HQ, Chancery Lane. It isn't quite as exciting as it sounds! The purpose of this event is for the Law Society senior staff – CEO Ian Jefferies and his team – to update Council on the Law Society's progress against the 3 year Business and Strategic Plan, 2022 – 2025, which can be found at [Corporate strategy 2022/2025 | The Law Society](#). It is also designed to allow the executive to receive input from Council to inform its 2025 – 2028 corporate strategy.

Your PC Fee

Of interest to practitioners, always, is the level of the practising certificate fee. In 2022 Council approved increases of 15%, 7% and 5% as part of the 3-year plan. We are now into year 3 and so the PC fee is likely to increase by 5% in October 2024 over the current fee (£307 in October 2023).

- Of the PC fees collected, approximately 27% funds the Law Society, 53% funds the SRA and 20% is a levy to pay the SRA compensation fund.

- Of the total PC fees received by TLS 74% comes from Solicitors in private practice and 26% working in house.
- 53% of PC holders are employed by the largest 200 firms in England and Wales.

Greater detail of the income and expenditure of the Law Society can be found at [Business review and annual report | The Law Society](#)

Other matters

The SPE heard from TLS staff on challenges to and opportunities for the profession in the near future including:

- Implications of a potential change of Government
- Challenges from low economic growth in the economy
- Technology challenges, in particular Generative AI
- CILEX seeking regulation by the SRA
- Axiom Ince

For the longer term the SPE sought Council's input (including in dreaded "breakout groups") on:

- TLS Bicentennial programme, 2025
- A "Get Involved" Strategy that TLS hopes will increase member engagement with TLS.

The SPE is the one opportunity for the elected Council to spend time in a room with TLS senior staff.

The work done by TLS is extensive, have a look at [the website](#). It is funded by less than £100 of your PC fee and I am of the view that it represents excellent value for money to members.

Andrew Bishop

Law Society Council Member for Sussex

Andrew.bishop@bishopandlight.co.uk

SELF-EMPLOYED PART-TIME OPERATIONS MANAGER FOR THE SUSSEX LAW SOCIETY

We are searching for a self-employed consultant (outside IR35) to work part-time for the Society. You will be responsible for providing administrative services to the Society's office holders and General Committee, carrying out day-to-day administrative tasks relating to the functioning of the Society and services to its members.

You will be organised, self-motivated, flexible, patient and diplomatic with strong interpersonal skills and be comfortable working with Word and Excel. A knowledge of WordPress, Xero and Mailchimp is preferable but not essential as training can be arranged. You will also have the ability to write and edit copy, have experience with social media and, ideally, a knowledge of the local legal landscape or experience of working in a law firm.

The role is remote and you would be using your own IT equipment [with access to Zoom and/or MS Teams]. If you would like a copy of the detailed description of services and how to apply, please contact Jeanette Lacy Scott jls@sussex-law.co.uk

Closing date for applications is 31st March 2024.

SUSSEX LAW SOCIETY WEBINARS AND COURSES

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

12th March 2024 – [‘Conveyancing Law Update including the Leasehold & Freehold Reform Bill’](#). 9.30 – 12.30. Live Webinar by Richard Snape

21st March 2024 – [‘Civil Procedure Update’](#). 9.30 – 12.30. Live webinar by Professor Dominic Regan.

26th March 2024 – [‘What’s on your website? An Update on the SRA Transparency Rules’](#). 12 noon – 1pm. Live webinar by Joanna Morris

25th April, 2024 – [‘Linkedin Basics for Personal Branding & Business’](#). 12noon to 1pm. Live webinar by Lou Earp

From 26th March 2024 – [Lunchtime Compliance Update Series](#). 12 noon – 1pm. Series of 8 live webinars by Joanna Morris every 2 weeks until 2nd July.

9th April, 2024 – [‘Quarterly Compliance Update for Law Firms’](#) 12 noon – 1pm. Live webinar by Joanna Morris.

OTHER COURSES/WEBINARS/ARTICLES/RESOURCES

7th March (5pm) - Westgate Chambers next Financial Remedies Seminar will take place on 7 March at 5pm via Zoom. This free to attend event, will be hosted by [Laura Buchan](#) and [Cerys Sayer](#) where they will discuss; Fabricated Documents: Myth or Reality? If you are yet to receive your invite for this Seminar, then please contact Chambers by email (family@westgate-chambers.co.uk)

12 March 2024 (12.30pm – 2pm) – ‘Sexual Harassment in the Workplace – Prevention, Conducting Investigations & More’ – Laura Donnelly, Associate Employment Law Solicitor at Martin Searle Solicitors, is running a virtual classroom seminar in association with MBL. The virtual classroom seminar will provide employers and HR with guidance on how to deal fairly with allegations of sexual harassment in the workplace, including running a fair and thorough investigation and reducing the risk of sexual harassment taking place in a workplace. For more information, [click here](#).

Articles

[‘Selling a Block of Flats’](#) Article from Becket Chambers

[‘President’s Guidance on Non-Molestation Orders – Anything New?’](#) Article from Becket Chambers

[‘Conduct in Divorce – Does it Really Matter’](#) Article from Becket Chambers

[‘Constructive Trusts – A Brief Overview’](#) Article from Becket Chambers

[‘Don’t be a Hostage’](#) You’d think that was trite advice, I mean, who wants to be in a hostage situation? But law firms everywhere are paying people to keep them hostage although they often don’t realise until too late... Article by Orion Legal Marketing looking at how some law firms don’t realise is that they are being held ‘hostage’ by their incumbent website suppliers.

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 Paul Sagoo, Secretary, SLSGS

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.

- **Court of Protection Health & Welfare / Mental Capacity Lawyer** – Martin Searle Solicitors are seeking 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](#).
- **Family Consultant Solicitor/Legal Executive** – This is an excellent role for those interested in pursuing a career in family law. The role will involve a varied caseload to include divorce, finances, private law children work, Family law act proceedings work, as well as managing Legal Aid caseloads in public law if required. It would be an advantage but not essential if the applicant can undertake their own advocacy. See [here](#) for more details.
- **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 Opportunity** - Goodlaw Solicitors would like to hear from experienced Private Client lawyers interested in a business development opportunity in Brighton and Hove. We can offer a truly autonomous role for the right candidate, who will grow our client base in this area. Flexible working and competitive salary available. Please send your CV and covering letter to Helen Davis hdavis@goodlawsolicitors.co.uk
- **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

LOCUMS

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](#) . 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 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 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 or text +44 7534 747667.

LOST & MISSING WILLS

Do you hold a will for the following:

Joseph (Joe) Clement HIRST DOB: 7/3/1942 Last Address is 12, Guildford Street,
Brighton Any information to his daughter, Sara Hirst,
sara.f.hirst@gmail.com

Mr John William James NEVILLE DOB: 29/12/1953 Last address: 30 Hamey Lane, Shoreham
Any information to his son, Garth Neville nevnev23@hotmail.co.uk

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

Marion Elizabeth WILMOT DOB: 6/9/1959 Last Address is Chandos, Billingshurst Road,
Coolham, W Sussex Any information to her brother, Mike Christie mike-christoe@blueyonder.co.uk

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 25th 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](#)

Contact [Jeanette Lacy Scott](#) if you no longer wish to receive the monthly Newsletter and put **UNSUBSCRIBE** in the subject heading.