

Subject: President's Weekly Local Law Societies Update 9.12.2019

President's Update



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.

If you are speaking on behalf of the Law Society, please use our latest position on issues. Click below for this week's.

Influencing on behalf of the profession and promoting the profession

The Law Society's media profile this week

I appeared on *Sky's Ian King Live* to discuss our new [Jurisdiction of Choice](#) report. King noted English law has been described as one of the UK's greatest exports. We discussed the sustained demand for the services of UK law firms, the attractions of our jurisdiction post-Brexit, and the challenge of ensuring practising rights are included in any future trade deals.

The [Gazette](#) led print coverage of the launch of our report. Also in the [Solicitors Journal](#), [New Law Journal](#) and [Barrister Magazine](#). I'm quoted saying I have "full of optimism that England and Wales will continue to flourish as a global legal centre of choice".

A [Newsnight](#) investigation – produced in collaboration with Law Society – looked into Release under Investigation (RUI). Our head of justice, Richard Miller, warned a "major scandal is brewing". Richard was quoted extensively in the [BBC news](#) story which featured on *Radio 4's PM*, *News at 10*, *BBC Radio 2*, *BBC Radio 5 live* & *12 others*. *LBC* meanwhile interviewed the co-chair of our criminal law committee, Ian Kelcey. It was also reported in the [Sun](#) (£), [Telegraph](#) (£), and [Yahoo UK & Ireland](#). Richard Miller, was then interviewed on [BBC Radio Newcastle](#) (06:30) with the issue also mentioned on *Look North*.

The [Gazette](#) had an article on the solicitor who reported the SRA's clickable logo to the data watchdog. A Law Society spokesperson said: "As our members would expect, the Law Society of England and Wales is in regular contact with the SRA so we can fully understand what is being done to address the concerns raised about the digital badge."

The [Gazette](#) carried tributes from across the profession to justice campaigners Jack Merritt and Saskia Jones, the victims of last Friday's terrorist attack at London Bridge.

[Today's Wills and Probate](#) reports on analysis from the Institute of Legacy Management showing a possible knock-on drop in legacy gifts to charities of 6% following delays to probate. The institute says it has been working with the Law Society to pressure HMCTS for a resolution to ongoing delays.

The [Gazette](#) covered our [LawTech Comparative Analysis](#), published this week which concludes that, while the UK's position is strong, it will need continual investment to stay on top. I had earlier warned: "Further investment and strategic support will be needed if we are to maintain our competitive edge in the global market."

[The Yorkshire Times](#) looks at the growing use of the pet-nup and cites our recommendation that custody issues for pets should be included in pre-nuptial agreements.

Clarification: Our news summary each week reports coverage that may be of interest to members and reflects diverse views of journalists, commentators and interviewees. Two weeks ago we listed an article in [NRT](#), 'The wheels of progress', which is an interview with judge HHJ Carolyn Hilder and the views outlined are hers.

Do not forget you can read all Law Society press releases by clicking on this [link](#). For live updates follow us on [Twitter](#).

Public Law and Justice

Probate delays

Following on from our meeting last week with HMCTS regarding delays to the probate service, the summary of the meeting is now available: <https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/news/stories/further-progress-probate-service/>

England and Wales: A world jurisdiction of choice

As part of our Global Legal Centre campaign, we've published a report outlining the strengths of the law, jurisdiction and legal professionals of England and Wales, as well as London's advantages as a seat of arbitration. (See *Media* above)

<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/policy-campaigns/campaigns/global-legal-centre/>

Office of the Public Guardian

The Law Society met with the newly appointed Office of the Public Guardian ('OPG') for a bi-annual meeting. Representatives of the Mental Health and Disability Committee and the Wills and Equity Committee were present to discuss matters relating to Lasting Powers of Attorney (LPA). The OPG also provided an update on their work relating to digitising LPA and their plans for reviewing guidance. Another meeting will be scheduled for the middle of next year.

Immigration

The Law Society wrote to the Legal Services Board to support the decision of the Solicitors Regulation Authority ('SRA') to postpone commencement of the parts of regulations 9.5 to 9.7 of the Authorisation of Individuals Regulations that would allow a solicitor to undertake immigration work outside of an authorised body. The Immigration Law Committee previously raised concerns in relation to these regulations with the SRA and the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner and advised that they are not brought into force without the production of SRA guidelines necessitating accountability between a supervising immigration solicitor, the people that they supervise and their clients.

Mental Health

The Law Society met with the Solicitors Regulation Authority to discuss SRA guidance on mental capacity, with members of the Mental Health and Disability Committee providing expertise on ethical issues that solicitors may encounter with regards to assessing a client's mental capacity.

Family

A new consultation has been released by the president of the Family Division's Working Group on Medical Experts in the Family Courts. The consultation document confirms the nature and extent of the shortages of medical and other health professional as experts, identifies a wide range of causes and proposes solutions. The Law Society will be responding, with contributions from the Family Law Committee and Children's Law Sub-Committee. Our response is due on 31 January 2020.

Regulation

AML Conference

On 26 November the Law Society hosted its largest ever anti-money laundering conference. The annual event, held at Bishopsgate, attracted more than 475 delegates from across the country and the profession. The programme drew on the expertise of law enforcement, the regulator and those in private practice (especially our Money Laundering Task Force). Delegates were informed about current issues in the law, upcoming enforcement priorities and anticipated legislative changes.

Legal Sector Affinity Group

Last Thursday, the Law Society hosted representatives from the supervisors and representative legal professional bodies across the UK for a quarterly meeting on anti-money laundering and financial crime. The focus of the meeting was on the upcoming legislative changes implementing the 5th EU Money Laundering Directive and the implementation of the public-private Economic Crime Plan.

Parliamentary - General Election

Ahead of next week's General Election, the Law Society launched its [TLS vision for law and justice](#) and have set up an [online tool for members](#) to write to their local candidates about key issues for the profession.

The Law Society has also analysed what each of the party manifestos said on law and justice which you can find [here](#). To accompany this we have analysed where the manifestos align with the recommendations that the Law Society made in its vision for law and justice – [read this here](#).

Please do feel free to share these documents and initiatives with your constituents.

Speeches

On Tuesday (3 December), I spoke with regard to welcoming remarks at the LawWorks 2019 Pro Bono Awards. On Thursday (5 December), vice president David Greene spoke at the 30th anniversary celebration of the Lawyers with Disabilities Division.

Thought Leadership

On Tuesday I hosted a lecture by the lord chief justice about the future of the judiciary as part of the Law Society's Future of Law series.

Our work internationally

Tenth Anniversary English Law Week in Russia 2019

I attended our tenth anniversary English Law Week in Moscow and St Petersburg 11-15 November organised by the Law Society and Bar Council of England and Wales to celebrate a decade of friendships, legal links and business between the two countries. Spending time with our Russian colleagues sharing ideas and expertise is an important example of how the international legal community can develop mutual understanding in the interests of individual and corporate clients. This flagship conference was organised in partnership with the British Embassy in Moscow, the Russian Federal Chamber of Lawyers, the Moscow Chamber of Advocates, the St Petersburg Chamber of Advocates, the Anglo-Russian Law Association, and the British Russian Law Association. More than 340 delegates registered, and many expressed a strong interest in continuing to use English law and jurisdiction for cross-border contracts and disputes despite Brexit.

Read more: <https://communities.lawsociety.org.uk/international/english-law-week-in-russia-2019/6000554.article>

ILAC delegation to Guatemala

Lizzette Robleto de Howarth, our international programmes manager, travelled to Guatemala this week on a follow-up visit with a delegation of the International Legal Assistance Consortium (ILAC) and the Vance Center for International Justice. The delegation met with a range of stakeholders including the British Ambassador to Guatemala and Honduras H.E. Nick Whittingham, the UN High Commission on Human Rights, the Human Rights Ombudsman, Guatemalan lawyers and judges. The outcome of this visit will be a judicial assessment report to be launched in 2020.

On Wednesday, Helena Raulus, head of our Brussels office, attended the Inclusive Leadership Roundtable this was co-organised with Robert Biedron, MEP at the European Parliament

On Friday, the Brussels Office co-ordinated an event with ECLA (European Company Lawyers Association) and ACC (Association of Corporate Counsel) at the European Parliament on: Closing the Gap between Artificial Intelligence and Regulatory Challenges. The event was hosted by Geoffroy Didier, MEP. Panellists were: Karen Melchior, MEP; Gregoire Miot, head of new markets Wolters Kluwer and Ilse de Loof, chief legal officer LBC Tanks. We received 65 registrations.

Supporting members at every stage of their career

Graham Turnbull Lecture - Tuesday 10 December 2019

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

Each year, law students, trainee solicitors, pupil barristers and junior lawyers (current, prospective or in between stages) are invited to enter our annual Graham Turnbull essay competition. The title of the 2019 essay is: 'Has the Rule of Law been replaced by the Rule of Politics?'

Capital markets in the 21st century – Friday 28 February 2020

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

We are delighted to announce that the sixth Law Society and American Bar Association capital markets conference will take place on 28 February 2020.

Supporting practice excellence

Compliance forum for COLPs/COFAs: SRA Standards and Regulations - Monday 13 January 2020

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

The Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) will be issuing new Standards and Regulations later this year which will replace the SRA Handbook. It will have a new reduced set of principles, two separate Codes of Conduct - an individual solicitor code and a firm code - and simplified Account Rules. This forum, aimed at COLPs and COFAs, will provide insight into the changes that you need to make.

[A Christmas quiz celebrating 100 years of women in law - Tuesday 10 December 2019](#)

Location: University Women's Club

Fancy being the next egghead? Test your colleagues' and friends' quiz skills and take part in what we're sure will be a fun evening for all. Join the Junior Lawyers Division and the Young Barristers' Committee on 10 December to celebrate 100 years of women in law.

[International Human Rights Day seminar "The Rise of Authoritarianism: Lawyers Upholding the Rule of Law"- Thursday 12 December 2019](#)

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

This seminar aims to explore the rise of authoritarianism and how it affects legal practitioners, as well as some of the initiatives of legal practitioners themselves and others to counter attacks on the legal profession

[New SRA Handbook compliance updates – what's new for in-house lawyers? -Thursday 16 January 2020](#)

Location: Gateley, 29 East Parade, Leeds LS1 5PS

The new SRA handbook brings changes for in-house lawyers. Gain clarity and get an understanding of what these updates mean for you practically. Come with any questions you may have and join us for an interactive session.

[Day of the Endangered Lawyer 2020 - Wednesday 22 January 2020](#)

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

Every year the Day of the Endangered Lawyer is organised to support lawyers at risk in a particular jurisdiction. In 2020, the focus will be on Pakistan. During this seminar, we will hear from one of the speakers about his personal experiences of litigating human rights cases in Pakistan.

[Advocacy and the Vulnerable Training, 24 January 2020, London - Afternoon session -Friday 24 January 2020](#)

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

The Advocacy and the Vulnerable 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.

[Judicial appointments: interview training for solicitors - Friday 7 February 2020](#)

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.

Webinars

[Risk management for small to medium law firms](#) - 17 December 2019 - 20% discount to Risk and Compliance and Law Management Section members

[Dubious investment schemes – Avoiding entity and individual regulatory liability](#) - 14 January 2020 - 20% discount to property and risk and compliance

[SRA Standards and Regulations - your obligations in managing risk](#) - 16 January 2020 inclusive to risk and compliance

[Practising as, and dealing with, unregulated businesses and freelance solicitors](#) - 13 February 2020 - 20% discount to risk and compliance

[The challenges facing small legal practices – what you need to know](#) - 27 March 2020 - 20% discount to risk and compliance and LMS

[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

Advocacy Update

Anti-money Laundering Update

City Update

Diversity & Inclusion Update

Sign-up method

[Update My Law Society preferences](#)

[Law Society newsletter page](#)

[Contact the City relationship management team](#)

[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
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
Campaigns Update	Sign up to the Campaigns Update newsletter
Parliamentary report	Sign up to the Parliamentary report newsletter

You can also register for the Gazette daily update [here](#).

Simon Davis
President

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