

# Bournemouth & District Lawyer



**Mark Proctor (BDLS President)  
Hannah Somers (Chadwick Nott)  
and Rob Leonard (3PB)**

**INCLUDED IN THIS ISSUE:**

- BDLS Lecture Programme
- Trainee and Newly Qualified Drinks Reception
- BDLS Annual Lunch
- Lawcare: The Hidden Cost of Thinking Like a Lawyer





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**Please Note** that the BDLS office will close on Tuesday 23 December and reopen on Monday 5 January 2026  
*Wishing all our members a joyful and restful Christmas and a Happy New Year!*

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### BOURNEMOUTH & DISTRICT LAWYER

#### Bournemouth & District Law Society Magazine

Members will receive our 'Bournemouth Lawyer' by email, including the flyers for events, webinars and lectures.

Our Magazines are sent out quarterly as follows:

EDITION	MONTH	COPY DEADLINE
<b>Spring</b>	<b>March 2026</b>	<b>30 January 2026</b>
<b>Summer</b>	<b>June 2026</b>	
<b>Autumn</b>	<b>September 2026</b>	
<b>Winter</b>	<b>December 2025</b>	

The copy deadline for receipt at the BDLS office for the next edition – the Autumn issue – will be **31st October 2025**.

We welcome your firms' news and any advertisements. Please send to [office@bournemouthlaw.com](mailto:office@bournemouthlaw.com).



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### COVER INFORMATION

Mark Proctor, BDLS President, Hannah Somers, Chadwick Nott, and Rob Leonard, 3PB

### EDITOR

Mandy Heath  
 Bournemouth & District Law Society  
 Fir Vale Road, Bournemouth  
 Dorset BH1 2JJ  
 Tel: 01202 587551  
 Email: [office@bournemouthlaw.com](mailto:office@bournemouthlaw.com)

### PUBLISHER

**Ian Fletcher**  
 Benham Publishing Limited  
 Aintree Building, Aintree Way,  
 Aintree Business Park, Liverpool L9 5AQ  
 Tel: 0151 236 4141  
 Email: [admin@benhampublishing.com](mailto:admin@benhampublishing.com)  
 Web: [www.benhampublishing.com](http://www.benhampublishing.com)



# BDLS CONTACTS

## President

### MARK PROCTOR

Aldridge Brownlee Solicitors  
277 Lymington Road, Highcliffe, Christchurch BH23 5EB  
Tel: **01425 282156**  
Email: [Mark.Proctor@absolicitors.com](mailto:Mark.Proctor@absolicitors.com)

## Senior Vice-President

### ADRIAN FALCK

Preston Redman  
Hinton House, Hinton Road, Bournemouth BH1 2EN  
Tel: **01202 292424**  
Email: [acf@prestonredman.co.uk](mailto:acf@prestonredman.co.uk)

## Junior Vice-President

### LAUREN DAY

Ellis Jones Solicitors  
302 Charminster Road, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH8 9RU  
Tel: **01202 057760**  
Email: [lauren.day@ellisjones.co.uk](mailto:lauren.day@ellisjones.co.uk)

## Honorary Secretary

### ANA DILLING

Rawlins Davy Reeves  
Beechurst, 153 High Street, Poole BH15 1AU  
Tel: **01202 674425**  
Email: [adilling@rawlinsdavyreeves.com](mailto:adilling@rawlinsdavyreeves.com)

## Treasurer

### CONOR MAHER

Ellis Jones Solicitors  
302 Charminster Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH8 9RU  
Tel: **01202 057867**  
Email: [conor.maher@ellisjones.co.uk](mailto:conor.maher@ellisjones.co.uk)

## Council Member

### PETER WATSON-LEE

Tel: **01425 270502**  
Email: [pwatson-lee@outlook.com](mailto:pwatson-lee@outlook.com)

## BDLS Society Manager

### MANDY HEATH

BDLS Office  
Borough Chambers, Fir Vale Road,  
Bournemouth BH1 2JJ  
Tel: **01202 587551**  
Email: [office@bournemouthlaw.com](mailto:office@bournemouthlaw.com)

# BDLS DIARY 2025/2026

<b>Fri 12 Dec 2025</b>	<b>Christmas Drinks</b> at The Alpine Bar in The Square, Bournemouth
<b>Wed 4 Feb 2026</b>	<b>BDLS Annual Lunch</b> at The Pavilion Ballroom, Westover Road, Bournemouth
<b>Fri 24 April 2026</b>	<b>BDLS Annual Dinner</b> at The Highcliff Marriott Hotel, Bournemouth, SAVE THE DATE
<b>Thur 8 - Sun 11 Oct 2026</b>	<b>BDLS European Conference</b> to Gibraltar

# The President's Column

## Mark Proctor



**I cannot quite believe as I write this my second column that I am almost half the way through my presidential year. The time just seems to fly by!**

I recently attended the Dorset Legal Service which was a moment to pause and reflect on the shared purpose that unites our profession. Seeing so many people gathered, including representatives from local councils, the fire service, the police, the courts, and our local judiciary, was a reminder of the strength of the legal community here in Dorset.

In contrast to this service of reflection, our recent wine tasting evening proved that lawyers are just as capable of appreciating a fine Merlot as they are of dissecting a tricky precedent. It was wonderful to see so many of you in a relaxed setting.

The BDLS committee also gathered at Bournemouth County & Crown Courts on 11 November for a short service of remembrance, where the memorial to solicitors who died in service during the First World War is now housed

Looking ahead, we have plenty to look forward to - including the Annual Lunch with our guest speaker, Reverend Richard Coles. Tickets are already selling quickly, so if you haven't yet reserved yours, I encourage you to do so. As in previous years, this event is expected to be a sellout.

We continue to run an extensive lecture programme and if you have not had an opportunity to view our upcoming courses I encourage you to visit the BDLS website: [www.bournemouthlaw.com/bournemouth-district-law-society-lectures](http://www.bournemouthlaw.com/bournemouth-district-law-society-lectures)

I look forward to continuing to meet as many members as possible at our various events over the coming months. As this is my last column before Christmas, I take this opportunity to wish you and your families a very merry Christmas and happy New Year. ■

**Mark Proctor**  
**BDLS President**

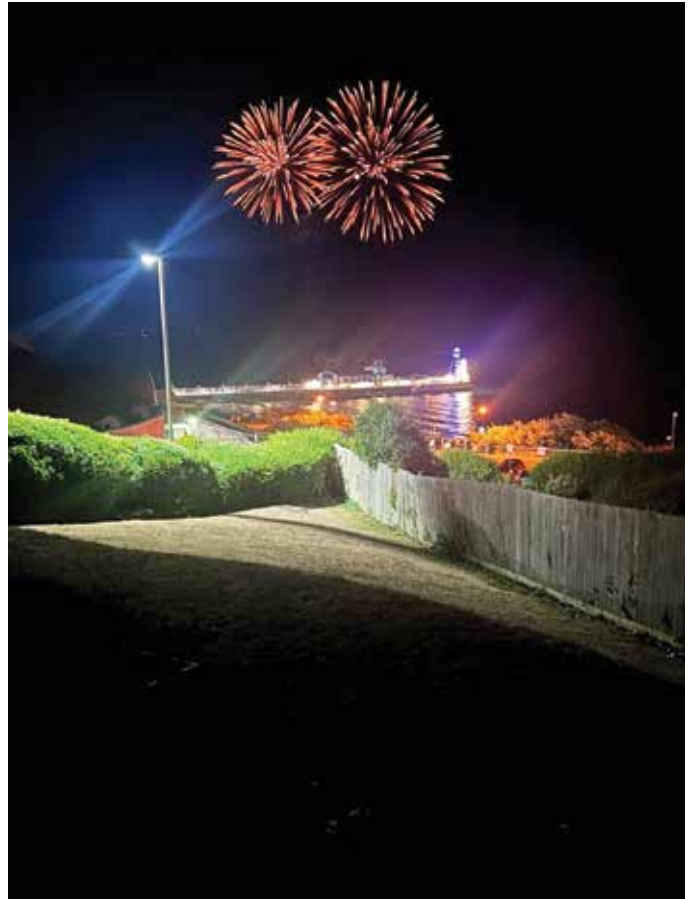
*"I take this opportunity to wish you and your families a very merry Christmas and happy New Year."*

# BDLS Summer BBQ

at the Highcliff Marriott, Bournemouth - Friday 29 August 2025



*A touch of summer indoors—Highcliff Marriott's garden-themed setup for the BDLS BBQ.*



*Ending the night with a view of Bournemouth Pier Fireworks*

**O**n Friday 29 August, BDLS hosted a summer BBQ at the Highcliff Marriott Hotel in Bournemouth, bringing together 70 guests from across the legal community for an evening of great food, entertainment and camaraderie.

Despite the less than ideal weather, the hotel team did a fantastic job of transforming the indoor space into a garden inspired setting. Faux grass, lanterns, foliage, deck chairs and garden games helped recreate the ambience of an outdoor gathering.

Guests were welcomed with a glass of Pimm's, followed by a delicious BBQ. The evening's entertainment featured talented singer and guitarist, Jack Rideout, whose performance added a lively and relaxed vibe to the event.

The night concluded with a spectacular finale watching the Bournemouth Pier Fireworks - a perfect end to a memorable evening.

A big thank you to everyone who joined us and helped make the event such a success! ■

**MANDY HEATH**  
BDLS Society Manager



# BDLS AUTUMN PUB WALK

In The New Forest - Saturday 11 October 2025



On a surprisingly warm Saturday in October, BDLS members, their families - and a number of enthusiastic dogs - gathered for a relaxed autumnal walk through the beautiful New Forest. The group enjoyed the seasonal scenery with golden leaves underfoot, making for a perfect setting to catch up and unwind. The circular walk included the Red Shoot pub, where everyone enjoyed a well-earned meal and drinks.

It was a lovely way to spend a Saturday, combining fresh air, good company, and the peaceful beauty of the New Forest. Thanks to everyone who came along and made it such a great day!

Our next pub walk will be in the New Forest on Sunday 14 December, stopping at the Balmer Lawn Hotel for lunch. Please contact Mandy at the BDLS office if you would like to join us [mandy@bournemouthlaw.com](mailto:mandy@bournemouthlaw.com) ■

## EDWARD HOLMES

BDLS Past President and Pub Walk Organiser!



*Pub Walk Red Shoot*



# BDLS An Autumn Evening Of Wine Tasting

## Marsham Court Hotel, Bournemouth - Thursday 23 October 2025

**We** were delighted to welcome back wine expert, Gemma Withenshaw, for another engaging BDLS wine tasting evening.

Although not quite the festive season, Gemma thoughtfully included a selection of wines that would be perfect for Christmas, alongside others that showcased a range of styles and flavours to suit all tastes. Her enthusiasm and passion for wine shone through as she guided us through each tasting, making the evening both informative and enjoyable.

Held at the Marsham Court Hotel, the event benefited from the venue's warm hospitality which provided the perfect setting for relaxed conversation and wine appreciation.

It was fantastic to see a great mix of familiar faces and first-time attendees, all coming together to enjoy an evening of discovery and connection. Events like these continue to highlight BDLS's commitment to hosting enjoyable social gatherings that give members the chance to connect, learn and make new friends.

A heartfelt thank you to our generous sponsors - Saffery and Iceberg - whose support helps make evenings like this possible. We were pleased to welcome their representatives, who joined us in sampling the wines and mingling with guests.

**MANDY HEATH**  
BDLS Society Manager

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# BDLS An Autumn Evening Of Wine Tasting

## Marsham Court Hotel, Bournemouth - Thursday 23 October 2025



Georgina Galton, Aneta Zaitlikova, Ana Estorillio, Katherine Chalk and Luke Federico



Charlotte Cooper, Georgia McWilliam, Lauren Harley, David McWilliam, Ian Butterworth, Paul Kanolik and Eloise Butterworth



Marie Harder, Kerry Houston-Kypta, Kelsey Cadden and Ellie Lewns



Amy Courtney, Sasha Chubb, Dan Stanton, Owen and Linda Thomas, Matthew Moore, Samantha Riley and Charlotte Quenault



Florence and Conor Maher with Ethan French and Bill Roberts from Iceberg



Charlotte Jones (Saffery) Mandy Heath, Mark Proctor, Gemma Withenshaw (wine expert), Bill Roberts and Ethan French (Iceberg), Alice Richardson (Saffery) and Julian Heath



# BDLS TRAINEE & NEWLY QUALIFIED LAWYERS DRINKS RECEPTION

Wednesday 12 November 2025 17:30 – 19:30  
Marsham Court Hotel, 3 Russell Cotes Road, Bournemouth

The Bournemouth & District Law Society (BDLS), in collaboration with the Bournemouth & District Junior Lawyers Division (BDJLD), hosted its annual Newly Qualified and Trainees Drinks Reception at the elegant Marsham Court Hotel. This special evening was dedicated to celebrating the achievements of our newly qualified solicitors and CILEX professionals, while warmly welcoming the next wave of trainees into the legal community.

The atmosphere was vibrant, with a real sense of excitement and optimism in the room. Attendees enjoyed the opportunity to network, share experiences and forge new connections that will shape the future of our profession. Events like these are a cornerstone of BDLS's commitment to fostering a strong, supportive community for the next generation of legal professionals.

We were delighted to see so many faces - both familiar and new - coming together to mark this important milestone. It is inspiring to witness the enthusiasm and ambition of those entering the profession and we look forward to seeing their careers flourish.

A huge thank you to our generous sponsors, **3PB Barristers** and **Chadwick Nott Legal Recruitment**, whose support made this event possible.

**MANDY HEATH**  
BDLS Society Manager

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Alex Chance, Evie Allum, Daisy Kershaw, Nathan Palmer and Jonathan Wilson



Jamie Blinko, Scott Rolfe and Emma Dawson



Chiara Parrella, Katherine Chalk, Hannah Feibusch, Skeet Northfield and Hannah Harrison



# BDLS TRAINEE & NEWLY QUALIFIED LAWYERS DRINKS RECEPTION



*Amelia Wingrove, Jackson Warriner and Alex Helliker*



*James Privett, Rhys Saidi and Jack Phillips*



*Amy Dashwood, Abbie Audrain, Abba Atkin, Charlie Turner, Hannah Collins, and Becky Hobell*



*Topaz Baird, Annie Lee and Antoni Dembski*



*Caroline Chambers, Matt Rushent and Charlotte Zanelli*



*Pippa Arnold, Toria Holland, Alis Simioniuc, Jasmine White, Rebekah Taylor and Liam Symonds.*

# LET'S GET FESTIVE! Christmas Drinks At The Alpine Bar

Friday 12 December 2025

17:30 -19:30

the Alpine Bar, The Square, Bournemouth



It is that time of year! Christmas is approaching and we would love members to join us for festive drinks at the Alpine Bar, The Square, Bournemouth on Friday 12 December between 17:30 – 19:30.

The chance to unwind, raise a glass and celebrate the Christmas season. Come by yourself or bring a friend. We hope to see you there!

*A quick note: Drinks will be available to purchase from the bar so feel free to grab your favourite cocktail or seasonal drink when you arrive.*

Please email [mandy@bournemouthlaw.com](mailto:mandy@bournemouthlaw.com) if you would like to come along so we know to look out for you!

# BDLS Annual Lunch

Wed 4 February 2026

The Pavilion, Bournemouth



Guest Speaker

## Rev. Richard Coles

We are delighted to have secured Rev. Richard Coles to speak at our prestigious Annual Lunch.

The response has been phenomenal, with **565 places already sold!** A limited number of places remain - don't miss this exceptional event.

Please email me at [mandy@bournemouthlaw.com](mailto:mandy@bournemouthlaw.com) for availability.

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# BDLS Annual Dinner

Friday 24 April 2026  
Highcliff Marriott, Bournemouth



Guest Speaker

## Mark Evans

The Law Society of England & Wales Vice President,

**Our Annual Dinner is on Friday 24 April 2026, once again at the Bournemouth Marriott Hotel.**

Our guest speaker will be Mark Evans, President of the Law Society of England & Wales.

Further details will be emailed to members shortly. In the meantime, please save the date.

Kindly sponsored by:



# BDLS European Law Conference 2026

Booking Deadline  
Approaching!



**Last chance to book your places on the BDLS European Law Conference 2026. We will be going to Gibraltar from 8 -11 October 2026.**

Hosted by BDLS Senior Vice-President, Adrian Falck, this unique event offers:

- Return coach travel, flights and 3 nights bed & breakfast at a 4-star hotel
- Tours of Gibraltar's legal, historical & natural landmarks
- Dolphin safari, Barbary apes reserve, war tunnels & more
- Gala dinner with Gibraltar legal and government representatives

Cost: expected £765–£815 pp

BDLS Member Discount: £90

Additional discount for BDJLD members: £125 (Limited availability – first come, first served)

Please download the flyer here:

BDLS European Conference 2026 - Flyer.pdf

To book, complete the form and email the organiser, Dan Stanton, at: [dns@prestonredman.co.uk](mailto:dns@prestonredman.co.uk) with your deposit confirmation.

The deadline for bookings is Friday 5 December.

**DAN STANTON**  
BDLS Gibraltar Conference Organiser

# BDLS Annual Membership Subscriptions 2026

Membership Annual Subscriptions are due on the 1 January 2026 for the period 01.01.26 – 31.12.26. The BDLS Office will be contacting all firms individually to update their membership details and request payment. The fees are as follows:

Type of Membership	£
Standard Membership	£95
Associate Membership	£70
<b>Concessions:</b>	
Member qualified for less than 5 years	£60
Member employed in a judicial or quasi-judicial position	£53
Fully retired member	£45
Member not in employment	£15
Public Sector Member	£0
Honorary Life Member	£0
Trainee Solicitor or CILEX	£0

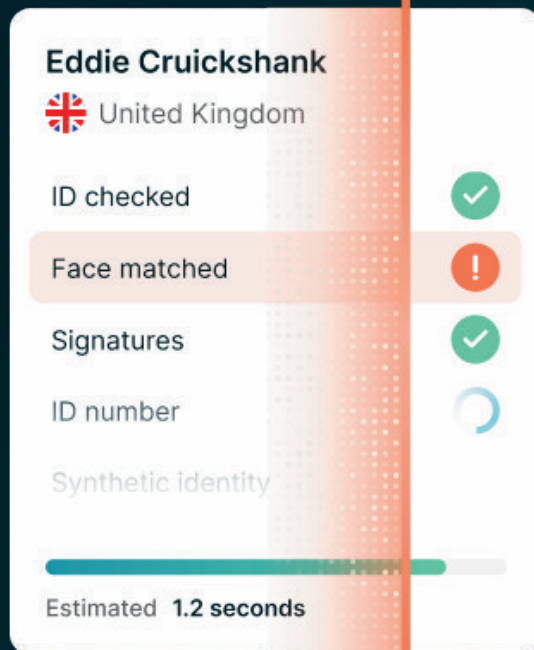
## Membership discounts are applicable as follows:

Fewer than 10 paying members	No discount
Between 10 and 15 paying members	12.5% discount for Standard and Associate Members
16 or more paying members	17.5% discount for Standard and Associate Members with a maximum payable of £2,500

- **Standard membership** If you are a solicitor and not currently a member, you are welcome to apply for standard membership.
- **Associate membership** applications are welcome from Legal Executives, Notaries, Barristers, Licensed Conveyancers and any other authorised persons under the Legal Services Act. We also welcome applications from individuals authorised by the SRA to hold compliance roles, such as COLPs and COFAs.
- **Public sector members** must be employed by a public body (e.g. Local Authority, HMCTS, CPS, Dorset Police). Membership is free and they will be added to the BDLS membership database, giving access to members-only events and training. *Please note: For any events or courses attended, public sector members will be required to pay the non-member rate.*

If you would like to become a member, please contact the BDLS office at [office@bournemouthlaw.com](mailto:office@bournemouthlaw.com) to request an application form.





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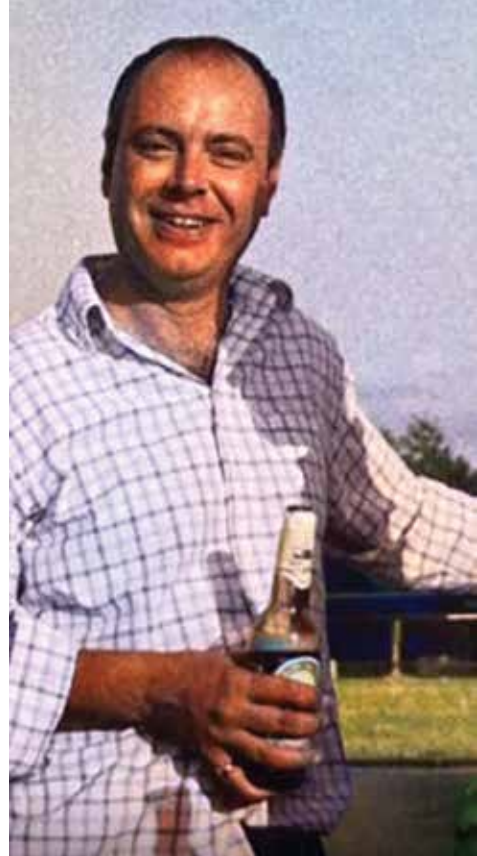


**DOW JONES**

# In Memoriam

## The Late Robert Gareth Price

23 February 1967 – 29 July 2025



**Robert died unexpectedly at the end of July from complications arising from a sudden heart attack. He was just 58.**

He had lived in and around Bournemouth for most of his life, having been born in Wales and brought up in various towns as his parents moved around for his father's role in the Civil Service. Robert followed his father into that profession, joining the Ministry of Defence from school, before leaving years later to retrain, qualifying as a solicitor in 1998. For 30 years he worked in law firms across the region, including Leighton's Solicitors, The Andrew Isaac's Practice, Stones Solicitors LLP, Harold G Walker, and latterly as a consultant to Loose Legal. During this time he had been a regular commentator for the BBC on matters of Family Law.

Throughout this career Robert was known as kind and caring, and always a fierce opponent of injustice and discrimination – and in his work in Family Law he helped hundreds of people move on with their lives, guiding them as their relationships fell apart. Ultimately he was recognised for that, with an advanced accreditation in Family Law, an award granted to just 3% of our profession. That came after a lot of hard work and he was rightly proud of it.

His other love was tennis, and he played for many years at West Hants, watching and attending championships whenever he could, particularly Wimbledon about which he was passionate. And he was artistic, painting regularly for a while, and then, bravely, he

took a break from the law, and followed his heart, starting his own design business. His art and designer furnishings even attracted the attention of the famous Chaplin's of London, and many of his works are still on display in restaurants and homes across the South.

In his final months he had started working with Loose Legal as part of his new consultancy practice, and he was very happy. It is a comfort to all who knew him that he was so happy in the weeks before he died. One of the adjacent photos show him smiling on holiday at the start of his career, and the other, moments after he had devoured a jam and cream scone, one of his favourites. He did love his food – and was a good cook. He liked to travel to explore other customs and cuisine and had visited Russia, Holland, Crete and Spain, Egypt, Hungary and South Africa as well as many ports on family cruise holidays. Indeed, earlier in his career, he combined his many interests and took a three-month break to volunteer in Manenberg, a township in Cape Town, teaching Primary School pupils in terribly impoverished areas how to understand 'phonics' as an addition to their existing curriculum.

His book, 'Family Law, A Client's Anthology' will be published posthumously by Loose Legal with all proceeds being donated to a domestic violence charity, as he had intended.

He is missed by friends, family and clients alike.

Condolences to his family and further enquiries can be made via his friend: Mark Broad Email: [m.broad@duttongregory.co.uk](mailto:m.broad@duttongregory.co.uk) ■





**BOURNEMOUTH & DISTRICT  
JUNIOR LAWYERS DIVISION**



# Bournemouth & District Junior Lawyers Division

I am pleased to announce that the BDJLD has held its annual AGM and elections for the 2025/26 committee. This year, we received an impressive number of applications compared to previous years, which I believe reflects a very successful year in expanding the BDJLD network.

Ahead of the AGM, we held an SGM to amend the constitution and introduce an additional committee role – the Vice Social Events Officer. Following feedback from the committee, it was decided that this role was essential to ensure the smooth running of events. We are excited to expand the committee and look forward to the positive impact this will bring.

Congratulations to all of those elected or re-elected.

Your BDJLD committee for the year ahead is as follows:

**President:**  
**Vice President:**  
**Secretary:**  
**Treasurer:**  
**Educational Events Officer:**  
**Publications and Communications Officer:**  
**Content Officer:**  
**Charities Officer:**  
**Social Events Officer:**  
**Vice Social Events Officer:**  
**Bar Liaison Officer:**  
**Sports Officer:**  
**Student Representative:**  
**National Representative:**  
**General Committee Members:**

**Daisy Kershaw** – Ellis Jones Solicitors  
**Jenny Sanderson** – Ellis Jones Solicitors  
**Imogen-Leigh Thomas** – Paris Smith  
**Isabella Zhang Thomas** – Lester Aldridge  
**Caroline Chambers** – Ellis Jones Solicitors  
**Ella-Marie Barlow** – Lester Aldridge  
**Hatice Dommett** – Paris Smith  
**Rebekah Taylor** – Harold G Walker  
**Abi Griffin** – 3PB  
**Evie Allum** – Ellis Jones Solicitors  
**Jessica Fassoli** – 3PB  
**Alexander Wissam Ayoub** – Preston Redmans  
**Dimitar Bogdanov** – Ellis Jones Solicitors  
**Georgia Hems** – Preston Redman  
**Emily Shepard** – Ellis Jones Solicitors  
**Sarah Bourgoin** – Ellis Jones Solicitors  
**Alex Chance** – Ellis Jones Solicitors  
**Jasmine White** – Ellis Jones Solicitors  
**Becky Hobell** – Steele Raymond

Over the past year, I have had the privilege of serving as the BDJLD's Social Events Officer, and I am delighted to now lead the committee as President, supported by an excellent team.

This year, we successfully raised £1,000 at our Summer Ball for our Charity of the Year, the Water Lily Project – a wonderful local organisation supporting individuals experiencing domestic abuse, violence, and mental health challenges.

The previous committee organised many successful events, and I intend to ensure that the social, educational, and sporting events calendar for the upcoming year continues to thrive, with strong engagement from our members.

Looking ahead, my priorities as President include strengthening our community through engaging events and collaboration with firms and organisations to create opportunities tailored to junior professionals. I also aim to increase our visibility and outreach by enhancing our online presence, ensuring the BDJLD remains a welcoming and valuable resource for anyone starting or developing their legal career in the region.

We will continue our commitment to charitable work by supporting the Water Lily Project until the end of January, at which point we will choose another local charity to support. I look forward to sharing my suggestions and hearing those of my fellow committee members.

Our first social event took place at Ouija in Bournemouth on 30 October – a terrifying escape room for those braver than me to attend! I'm pleased to confirm that all participants escaped successfully and lived to tell the tale.

Our annual Christmas Charity Quiz will be held at Aruba on 2 December; this event will again raise funds for the Water Lily Project. 50% of ticket sale proceeds, together with all proceeds from our raffle on the night will be donated. I am thrilled that we already have over 65 people attending (and counting)! There are some great prizes to be won so please do come along and show your support.

The BDJLD website is due for a revamp, and I'm eager to ensure fresh content is published regularly this year. If you don't already, please follow *Bournemouth & District JLD* on LinkedIn to stay up to date with our announcements and events.

As always, we welcome input from members on any events, content, or resources you would like to see from your JLD. ■

**Daisy Kershaw**  
**President for the BDJLD**  
<https://www.bdjld.co.uk/>



# Dye & Durham Enhances AML Compliance with Credas Integration in its Unity Practice Management

**Dye & Durham UK, one of the UK's leading legal technology providers, has announced the integration of a new suite of Anti-Money Laundering (AML) and Know Your Customer (KYC) tools into its Unity Practice Management platform, powered by market-leading digital ID provider Credas.**

This launch comes at a crucial time, as the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) continues to issue significant five-figure fines for non-compliance of AML regulations – with one firm receiving a penalty of £114,000 in July this year\*. For legal practices, efficient, auditable onboarding and risk checks are no longer optional but are essential.

With the Credas integration, firms can now trigger advanced compliance checks on a Pay-As-You-Go basis directly within Unity, streamlining the entire process while ensuring real time results, full audit trails and secure document handling.

The offering includes:

- **Biometric ID & Instant AML Check:** Combines standard AML checks with facial recognition, liveness detection and NFC-based document verification.
- **Safe Harbour Checks (Vendor & Purchaser):** Specifically designed to meet Land Registry's Safe Harbour standards.
- **Source of Funds Verification:** Dynamic questionnaires and open banking integration for thorough yet efficient due diligence.

Results are returned and stored within the Unity case file, supporting compliance, audit-readiness and risk mitigation.

Confirms Chris Shingler, Technical Product Manager at Dye & Durham UK: "The reality is that older ID checking systems just aren't fit for today's threats, and that's before you even consider how cumbersome they are to manage. Our new Credas integration means firms can trigger checks with the data they already hold, see live progress and store every result securely, all without ever leaving Unity."

"From a compliance point of view, it's a game changer. The SRA is cracking down hard and we're reading news headlines reporting record fines every week. Our integration gives firms the assurance that they're on top of their AML duties, with no manual tracking, no risk of missing documentation and everything in one place."

Credas already supports over 350,000 AML checks every month, is involved in more than half of all UK property transactions and boasts a 4.6-star independent review rating.

Archie Barnett, Manager of the Client Delivery Team at Dye & Durham UK added: "This isn't just about convenience: it's about protecting your firm, your clients and your reputation from financial crime and non-compliance. All of Dye & Durham's customers can now benefit from the same secure, scalable compliance infrastructure as some of the biggest names in the sector."

For more information on Dye & Durham UK, visit: [www.dyedurham.co.uk](http://www.dyedurham.co.uk) ■



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# BDLS Lecture Programme 2025/26

## KEY:

**LIVE WEBINARS**

**FACE TO FACE LECTURES**



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DATE AND TIME	LECTURE	FORMAT	LECTURER	VENUE
<b>2025</b>				
3 December 2025 10:30 – 11:00	<b>AI in Practice: Transforming Legal Practice with Basics</b>	Live Webinar	Chris Wright	Zoom
15 December 2025 14:00 – 15:00	<b>How to Respond to Residential Enquiries in Light of the New TA6 (6th Edition)</b>	Live Webinar	Richard Snape	Zoom
<b>2026</b>				
15 January 2026 11:00 – 12:00	<b>Tips and Traps for Residential Conveyancers and Residential Leases</b>	Live Webinar	Ian Quayle	Zoom
22 January 2026 11:00 – 12:00	<b>Law Firm Growth, Profit and Client Development Strategies for Legal Professionals</b>	Live Webinar	Jay Sahota	Zoom
27 January 2026 11:00 – 12:00	<b>Overcoming Imposter Syndrome: Leading with Authenticity and Confidence</b>	Live Webinar	Jess Wiggins	Zoom
11 February 2026 09:30 – 12:45	<b>Lifetime Trusts And Post Budget Issues- The Need To Knows</b>	Face to Face	Helen Forster	Marsham Court Hotel
11 February 2026 14:00 – 17:15	<b>An Estate Administration Update</b>	Face to Face	Helen Forster	Marsham Court Hotel
24 February 2026 09:30 – 12:15	<b>Family Law 2026 – The Latest Developments</b>	Face to Face	Safda Mahmood	Queens Hotel
24 February 2026 13:30 – 16:15	<b>Advocacy Training in Family Law</b>	Face to Face	Safda Mahmood	Queens Hotel
26 February 2026 14:00 – 17:15	<b>Source of Funds, Source of Wealth &amp; Client Matter Risk Assessments – how to complete them way the SRA expect</b>	Face to Face	Tracy Thompson	Marsham Court Hotel
19 March 2026 11:00 – 12:00	<b>Emergency First Aid at Work</b>	Live Webinar	Richard Snape	Zoom
24 March 2026 14:00 – 17:15	<b>Topic to be confirmed</b>	Face to Face	John Bunker	TBC
26 March 2026 TBC	<b>Civil Litigation Conference</b>	Face to Face	Various	Queens Hotel
16 April 2026 11:00 – 13:00	<b>Introduction to Commercial Leases</b>	Live Webinar	Hannah McKinley	Zoom
21 April 2026 11:00 – 12:00	<b>Topic to be confirmed</b>	Live Webinar	Gary Spencer-Humphrey, Novacare	Zoom
19 - 20 May 2026 09:30 – 17:00	<b>Residential Conveyancing for Support Staff</b>	Face to Face	Ian Quayle	Marsham Court Hotel
21 May 2026 09:30 – 12:45	<b>Residential Conveyancing Update</b>	Face to Face	Ian Quayle	Marsham Court Hotel



# BDLS Lecture Programme 2025/26 (cont.)

DATE AND TIME	LECTURE	FORMAT	LECTURER	VENUE
21 May 2026 14:00 – 17:15	<b>Commercial Property Update</b>	Live Webinar	Ian Quayle	Marsham Court Hotel
17 June 2026 09:15 – 16:30	<b>Family Law Conference</b>	Face to Face	Various	Marsham Court Hotel
24 June 2026 10:30 – 12:30	<b>Topic to be confirmed</b>	Live Webinar	John Bunker	Zoom
2 July 2026 13:30 – 16:45	<b>Topic to be confirmed</b>	Face to Face	Richard Snape	TBC
9 July 2026 TBC	<b>Compliance Conference</b>	Face to Face	Various	Marsham Court Hotel
9 September 2026 11:00 – 12:00	<b>Leading With Focus: Managing Overwhelm, Time &amp; Your Team Effectively</b>	Live Webinar	Jess Wiggins	Zoom
17 September 2026 11:00 – 12:00	<b>Topic to be confirmed</b>	Live Webinar	Ian Quayle	Zoom
6 October 2026 11:00 – 13:00	<b>Boundary Disputes: A Practical Approach</b>	Live Webinar	Hannah McKinley	Zoom
3 November 2026 11:00 – 12:00	<b>Topic to be confirmed</b>	Live Webinar	Richard Snape	Zoom

All lectures are to be booked online. For further details please visit Bournemouth and District Law Society Website.

[www.bournemouthlaw.com/lectures](http://www.bournemouthlaw.com/lectures) or scan here: ■



## Course Notes

For environmental reasons, BDLS will no longer be providing printed course notes at lectures. Lecture notes will be emailed to delegates in advance for either printing or accessing via their laptop or alternative device on the day.

## Payment for lectures

Please note: Payment must be received at the office before the lecture takes place. All payments are to be paid by BACS. Course bookings will only be confirmed upon payment. Webinars are charged per person and not for group bookings.

## Cancellation Policy

No refunds will be given for any booking cancelled within seven days of the lecture/webinar taking place.

We strive to offer our members a range of lectures not just covering competency “B” – Technical Legal Practice but also to meet the wider competencies which all solicitors need to state annually they are meeting. The 4 competencies are:

**A – Ethics, Professionalism and Judgement**

**B – Technical Legal Practice**

**C – Working with other people**

**D – Managing yourself and your own work**

For further information:

<https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/continuing-competence/cpd/competence-statement/>. ■

# Summary of Upcoming Lectures and Webinars

## WEBINAR Monday 15 December 2025 – 14:00 – 15:00

Topic **HOW TO RESPOND TO RESIDENTIAL ENQUIRIES IN LIGHT OF THE TA6 (6TH EDITION)**

Lecturer **Richard Snape**

Cost **£35 – Member and Associate Members of BDLS/Trainees** (Solicitors; Cilex; Apprentices)  
**£55 – Non Member of BDLS**

■ The TA6 (6th edition) was published on 13th October 2025. This session explores key issues arising from the updated form, including how to handle residential enquiries, the law of misrepresentation, and liability for clients and conveyancers. The session will also cover the structure and content of the new form. Key topics include:

- Enquiries generally
- Misrepresentation generally
- Material Information
- The Digital Markets, Competition and Consumers Act 2024
- Specific issues such as Japanese Knotweed, solar panels, and septic tanks



## WEBINAR Thursday 15 January 2026 – 11:00 – 12:00

Topic **TIPS AND TRAPS FOR RESIDENTIAL CONVEYANCERS AND RESIDENTIAL LEASES**

Lecturer **Ian Quayle**

Cost **£40 – Member and Associate Members of BDLS/Trainees** (Solicitors; Cilex; Apprentices)  
**£60 – Non Member of BDLS**

■ This webinar is suitable for residential conveyancers of all levels and experience and will explore:

- Scoping the retainer in residential leasehold transactions
- Explaining the bigger picture
- Advising on problem lease clauses
- Dealing with service charge
- Dare you deal with BSA related transactions?





# Summary of Upcoming Lectures and Webinars

## WEBINAR Thursday 22 January 2026 – 11:00 – 12:00

Topic **LAW FIRM GROWTH, PROFIT AND CLIENT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES FOR LEGAL PROFESSIONALS**

Lecturer **Jay Sahota**

Cost **FREE for Members and Non-Members of BDLS**

■ This webinar will cover:

- Better billing – strategies to increase revenue efficiently
- Better conversion – turning more enquiries into paying clients
- Getting more work from existing clients – maximizing client value
- Winning work through networking – practical tips to grow your client base



## WEBINAR Tuesday 27 January 2026 – 11:00 – 12:00

Topic **OVERCOMING IMPOSTER SYNDROME - LEADING WITH AUTHENTICITY AND CONFIDENCE**

Lecturer **Jess Wiggins**

Cost **£30 – Member and Associate Members of BDLS/Trainees** (Solicitors; Cilex; Apprentices)  
**£55 – Non Member of BDLS**

■ Do you ever feel like you're just one step away from being "found out" and that you have just got to where you are by chance? Even high achieving lawyers can struggle with imposter syndrome, the persistent belief that their success is due to luck rather than skill. This engaging, practical webinar will unpack why these feelings arise, how they impact performance and wellbeing, and what you can do to overcome them so you can lead with clarity, authenticity, and confidence.

In this 1-hour webinar, you will learn:

- What imposter syndrome really is and why it shows up so often in the legal profession.
- The psychology behind self-doubt helping you understand the thought patterns that fuel it.
- How perfectionism and comparison play a hidden role in keeping imposter feelings alive.
- Practical mindset shifts and tools to reframe self-criticism and build inner confidence.
- Strategies to lead authentically so you can show up in the way you want to, even under pressure.
- Ways to cultivate a supportive culture that normalises growth and vulnerability among peers and teams.

Whether you are a junior lawyer finding your footing or a seasoned professional stepping into leadership, this session will help you silence the inner critic and own your success with confidence.



# Summary of Upcoming Lectures and Webinars

## LECTURE Wednesday 11 February 2026 – 09:30 – 12:45

Topic **LIFETIME TRUSTS AND POST BUDGET ISSUES- THE NEED TO KNOWS**

Lecturer **Helen Forster**

Venue **Marsham Court Hotel, Bournemouth**

Cost **£100 – Member and Associate Members of BDLS/Trainees** (Solicitors; Cilex; Apprentices)  
**£150 – Non Member of BDLS**

Tax planning is becoming more prevalent following the budget changes, and practitioners are often faced with challenges when trusts are already in place. The introduction of the Residence Nil rate band has meant that many who placed their family homes into trust many years ago will lose out on a valuable IHT allowance; those with significant agricultural and business assets in trust are now also facing problems at 10 year charges, with significant costs being levied when the IHT limits kick in in 2026.

This session will run through the need to knows of lifetime trusts, how charges are levied, and how to calculate charges from April 2026. We will also cover options available to mitigate problems, and the advice you can provide to those who will be subjected to extra charges in light of budget changes.

We will cover

- Types of lifetime trust
- Calculating a 10 year charge and exit charges
- The impact of the APR/BPR rules on trusts
- Mitigating tax problems
- The interaction between RNRB and trusts of property
- Practical tips on using trusts as a tax vehicle



## LECTURE Wednesday 11 February 2026 – 14:00 – 17:15

Topic **AN ESTATE ADMINISTRATION UPDATE**

Lecturer **Helen Forster**

Venue **Marsham Court Hotel, Bournemouth**

Cost **£100 – Member and Associate Members of BDLS/Trainees** (Solicitors; Cilex; Apprentices)  
**£150 – Non Member of BDLS**

Significant changes have resulted in administration becoming more complex in recent years- the budgets have brought in yet further complications for anyone with private pensions, and significant agricultural and business assets. Combined with general day to day management, practitioners are now faced with technical challenges from the outset of administration. It is important to be aware of the current rules, as well as keeping up to date with proposed changes that will impact administrations in the future. In addition, the Law Society statistics show that 1 in 4 estates are now challenged, and practitioners need to be aware of what they can do to protect the estate in the event of a will challenge or inheritance act claim.

We will cover

- A general overview of the administration process as things stand
- APR/BPR and its impact from April 2026
- Pension changes from April 2027 and their impact
- Income and CGT on estates and calculating
- When to register an estate for TRS
- Will trusts
- Deeds of variation
- Challenges to estates and how to respond
- The Will bill and its potential impact on administration



# Summary of Upcoming Lectures and Webinars

## LECTURE Tuesday 24 February 2026 – 09:30 – 12:15

Topic	<b>FAMILY LAW 2026 – THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS</b>
Lecturer	<b>Safda Mahmood</b>
Venue	<b>Queens Hotel, Bournemouth</b>
Cost	<b>£100 – Member and Associate Members of BDLS/Trainees</b> (Solicitors; Cilex; Apprentices) <b>£150 – Non Member of BDLS</b>

This lecture will cover:

### Divorce Changes :

- Divorce Law and Changes
- How is it operating and what to be aware of?
- Problem areas to be aware of

### Financial Remedy and Cohabitation Cases

- Developments in Procedure
- Periodical Payments and Maintenance Pending Suit
- Consideration of Inheritance and Gifts, and Barder Principles
- Conduct Arguments and Disclosure - What is the latest on this?
- Sharing principles following Standish 2025
- Nuptial Agreements and Case Law Update
- TOLATA and Key Principles – What does a family practitioner need to know?
- Developments

### Private Children Law

- Domestic Abuse and Enforcement – What are the options?
- Specific issue matters relation to Parental Responsibility – Current Developments
- Scott Schedules, Narrative Statements and Controlling/Coercive Behaviour
- Enforcement of Orders and Alienating Behaviour cases – Current Thinking

### Domestic Abuse Law and Children Cases

- Domestic Abuse Developments
- Running cases effectively
- Cross-examination, QLR's and Developments
- Understanding PD12J and its application





# Summary of Upcoming Live Time Lectures and Webinars

## LECTURE Tuesday 24 February 2026 – 13:30 – 16:15

Topic	<b>ADVOCACY TRAINING IN FAMILY LAW</b>
Lecturer	<b>Safda Mahmood</b>
Venue	<b>Queens Hotel, Bournemouth</b>
Cost	<b>£100 – Member and Associate Members of BDLS/Trainees</b> (Solicitors; Cilex; Apprentices) <b>£150 – Non Member of BDLS</b>

With more pressure on lawyers to do their own advocacy in family courts, this course will equip you with essential tips in being able to conducting advocacy in aspects of family law. There will be a particular focus on children care cases, ranging from private children law cases, emergency applications, interim hearings, contested hearings, and case management hearings. Safda will also cover advocacy in personal protection injunction cases and basic financial remedy cases.

This course is designed to support professionals working with parents, children, extended family members, and local authorities. The session will be valuable for Solicitors, Barristers, Chartered Legal Executives, Local Authority lawyers, trainees, paralegals, and support staff involved in this area of practice.



The topics covered will include, amongst others, the following:

- Understand good advocacy skills
- Court set up
- Become more confident, despite a 'difficult' opponent
- Effective preparation
- Calling Evidence
- Making good opening and closing speeches/submissions
- Carry out effective examination-in-chief and cross-examination
- Emergency Hearings
- Private Children Law Cases
- Basic Financial Remedy Cases
- Contested Hearings
- Non - Molestation and Occupation Order Applications
- Case Management and Issues Resolution Hearings

# The Council Member's Report

**PETER WATSON-LEE**

Law Society Council Member for Dorset



## Another Damning Report: The SRA Under Fire Again

Yet again, the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) finds itself at the centre of a regulatory storm—this time over its failure to intervene in the collapse of Sheffield-based law firm SSB.

SSB rapidly expanded its operations by taking on thousands of cavity wall insulation claims, many referred by claims management companies and pursued on a 'no win, no fee' basis. The firm ballooned to 200 fee earners, but fewer than 10 were qualified solicitors. Crucially, the insurance required to protect clients under the 'no win, no fee' model was never secured.

As debts mounted, SSB fell into administration, leaving behind £200 million in liabilities. Even more devastating, many clients—whose cases had failed—are now in desperate positions and are even being personally chased for defendants' legal costs.

Was the SRA aware of the brewing crisis? Astonishingly, yes. Over 100 warnings were submitted, including alerts from clients, barristers, fellow law firms, MPs, and the Insurance Fraud Bureau. At one point, the SRA even discovered that SSB owed £128 million to litigation funders, with interest rates exceeding 32%, and had already defaulted on previous loans. Still, it failed to act.

A newly released report delivers a scathing critique of the SRA's inaction. The Legal Services Board, the overarching regulator, has publicly censured the SRA, and the Law Society has echoed that condemnation.

Paul Phillips, the SRA's long-serving CEO, has now departed—though officially "retired" rather than dismissed. In light of this debacle, the case for the SRA to refocus on its core regulatory responsibilities must be unanswerable.

## MAZUR V CHARLES RUSSELL SPEECHLYS

Few reading this will be unaware of the reverberations from the case of Mazur v Charles Russell Speechlys. The fallout is significant, particularly for experienced CILEx members and paralegals who, until now, rightly believed they were entitled to carry out litigation work. The distress this ruling has caused is profound—many feel their professional standing has been abruptly and unfairly taken away.

It was good to see Bournemouth & District Law Society (BDLS) quickly running talks on the implications, and the Law Society also acted quickly to issue guidance which will be updated as matters develop.

While the ruling itself is unlikely to be overturned, I see proposals are already underway to fast-track stand alone litigation practice rights for legal executives which may help some.

Still, the wider ramifications are considerable. Many law firms will need to restructure how litigation work is allocated, and there is the unedifying picture of cost challenges where non-solicitors were involved in litigation.

The disruption to the business models of many firms and the fallout from the case is not to be underestimated.

## GET INVOLVED: A WAY TO SHARE YOUR EXPERTISE

The Law Society has just launched Get Involved—a new volunteering programme designed for all solicitors from across the profession.

As the legal landscape continues to diversify, the Society is keen to hear from solicitors from all areas of the profession. Research shows that while many solicitors would be happy to contribute, not everyone has the time to commit to standing committees. Get Involved is there to provide solicitors with flexible opportunities to share their knowledge and experience on the issues and subjects that interest them.

Rather than me say more, please do visit the Law Society website Get Involved | The Law Society and explore Get Involved for yourself. Signing up is quick, there's nothing to lose and you may find it interesting.

Having been part of the planning team behind this project, I'd love to hear your thoughts—good, bad, or in between. Your feedback will help shape how Get Involved evolves.

## MARK EVANS TAKES THE HELM AT THE LAW SOCIETY

October saw Mark Evans stepping into the role of President. Widely regarded as a popular and approachable figure, Mark brings his Welsh roots, high street conveyancing background, his passion for running, and a grounded outlook on life to make him a well-liked presence across the profession.

Despite only being a few weeks into the role, Mark has already hit the ground running, representing solicitors internationally in Mexico, Toronto, and Scotland within his first few weeks.

I am delighted Mark will be joining us as guest speaker at our Dinner in April. It promises to be a memorable evening, so do make sure you come along and hear from our new President in person. ■

**Peter Watson-Lee**

Law Society Council Member for Dorset



Mark Evans, our newly appointed Law Society President, joins the Welsh Choir he had invited to perform at his Law Society Inauguration



## PRACTICE MANAGERS/MANAGING PARTNERS/ HRMANAGERS/COLPS/COFAS – WHATSAPP FORUM

A platform for discussing best practices, share information and seek advice on issues specific to these roles.

If you would like to join this group, please email [mandy@bournemouthlaw.com](mailto:mandy@bournemouthlaw.com) with your mobile number



## New Chair of the BDLS Wellbeing & Diversity Sub-Committee

We are delighted to announce that Sam Linford of Luff Brook Carter has been appointed as Chair of the BDLS Wellbeing & Diversity Sub-Committee. Sam brings great energy and insight to the role, and we are confident she will be a strong advocate for our members' wellbeing and inclusion.



# The hidden cost of thinking like a lawyer

**"Think like a lawyer" is a phrase you often hear during legal training or in the workplace. But what does it really mean? Usually, it refers to being analytical, detail-focused, risk-aware, and planning for all possible outcomes. These are important skills for legal work. But when they start to shape how you think and behave outside work, they can take a toll on your mental health.**

Many people drawn to the legal profession are what we might call *insecure overachievers*. They push themselves hard, want to be the best, and feel the need to constantly prove their worth. They often hold themselves to extremely high standards and rarely feel satisfied with their own performance, even when things go well. Instead of celebrating success, they focus on what they could have done better. When something goes wrong, at work or in life, it can feel overwhelming.

The working environment in law doesn't always help. It's high-pressured and highly regulated. Mistakes can carry serious consequences, and a culture of fear and blame is often present. This can make people feel unsafe to speak up if they're struggling. Many lawyers experience imposter syndrome, which is the feeling that they're not good enough and might be exposed at any moment, no matter how capable or experienced they are.

On top of all this, our brains are naturally wired to focus on the negative. We remember criticism more than praise, and we're quick to dwell on what went wrong. Lawyers, who often work long hours with little downtime, are especially prone to overthinking. Add everything together, and it's easy to see why stress, anxiety, and burnout are so common in the legal sector.

### Unhelpful thinking patterns

At LawCare, we regularly hear from people in the legal sector who are caught in unhelpful thinking patterns. Here are some of the most common:

- **Catastrophising** – Jumping to the worst-case scenario. One mistake feels like the end of your career
- **Minimising** – Brushing off problems instead of facing them. You tell yourself it's no big deal, even when it clearly is.
- **Emotional reasoning** – Letting feelings become facts. If you feel like a failure, you assume it must be true, even when the evidence says otherwise.

- **All-or-nothing thinking** – Seeing everything as black or white. If something isn't perfect, it's a total failure.
- **Mental filtering** – Ignoring the positive and zooming in on the bad. Ten people praised your work, but you only remember the one bit of criticism.
- **Shoulds and musts** – Setting harsh rules for yourself which only adds more pressure.
- **Personalisation** – Taking the blame for things outside your control, like believing a client's disappointment is entirely your fault.
- **Labelling** – Defining yourself in negative ways based on one moment or mistake ("I'm not cut out for this"), which can stop you from growing.

### What can actually help?

If you're feeling overwhelmed, here are a few things that can make a real difference. Even small changes can have a big impact.

- Come back to the present. Try to focus on what's happening right now, not what *might* go wrong. Your mind may race ahead, but grounding yourself in the moment can bring some calm.
- Talk it out. Whether it's a colleague, a friend, or a support service. Sharing how you're feeling can take the pressure off and help you see things more clearly.
- Remind yourself of your wins. Keep a folder or list of positive feedback, kind messages, or moments you're proud of. It's easy to forget the good outcomes when you're under stress.
- Watch your inner voice. If you wouldn't say it to a friend, don't say it to yourself. Self-compassion isn't soft - it's a skill.
- Make time for what lifts you up. Whether it's a walk, music, seeing friends, or doing something creative.
- Take real breaks. Time off isn't a luxury; it is essential helps you stay well. Give yourself permission to rest, properly.
- Look around you. Ask yourself honestly: is your work environment helping your wellbeing, or making it harder? If it's the latter, it might be time to make a change.

If you're struggling, you're not alone. **LawCare is here to support anyone working in the legal sector.** Call us on 0800 279 6888, email [support@lawcare.org.uk](mailto:support@lawcare.org.uk), or chat with us online at [www.lawcare.org.uk](http://www.lawcare.org.uk). We've also got lots of resources and information on our website. ■



## LawCare is the mental health charity for the legal sector

# LawCare

LawCare offers free and confidential emotional support, peer support, and information to people working in law in the UK.



LawCare helpline: **0800 278 6888**



Online chat: **[www.lawcare.org.uk](http://www.lawcare.org.uk)**

You can also email **[support@lawcare.org.uk](mailto:support@lawcare.org.uk)**. The helpline is open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. All calls and chats are answered by trained volunteers with direct experience of the legal sector.

Free, confidential, non-judgemental emotional support for anyone working in a legal environment. We provide a space for you to talk through whatever is on your mind. We can also signpost you to other support agencies. Please contact any of the following:



**Mark Kiteley**  
**[mkiteley@rawlinsdavyreeves.com](mailto:mkiteley@rawlinsdavyreeves.com)**  
Tel: 01202 558844



**Sally Crawford**  
**[Sallycrawf@gmail.com](mailto:Sallycrawf@gmail.com)**  
Tel: 07973 148264



**Edward Holmes**  
**[egholmes@meesons-spurlings.co.uk](mailto:egholmes@meesons-spurlings.co.uk)**  
Tel: 01425 484420



**Maddy Longland**  
**[ml@mjplaw.co.uk](mailto:ml@mjplaw.co.uk)**  
Tel: 01202 842929



**Mandy Heath**  
**[mandyjheath@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:mandyjheath@hotmail.co.uk)**  
Tel: 07763 833256



**Lauren Mars**  
**[lauren.mars@teeslaw.com](mailto:lauren.mars@teeslaw.com)**  
Tel: 07764 582128



**Alan Turle**  
**[a.turle51@gmail.com](mailto:a.turle51@gmail.com)**  
Tel: 07720 406962



**Sarah Unsworth**  
**[Bacchante2012@gmail.com](mailto:Bacchante2012@gmail.com)**  
Tel: 01590 676933



**Maria Evans**  
**[maria.evans@trethowans.com](mailto:maria.evans@trethowans.com)**  
Tel: 01202 338580



**Marie Harder**  
**(mental health first responder)**  
**[mharder@coles-miller.co.uk](mailto:mharder@coles-miller.co.uk)**  
Tel: 01202 338885



**Liam Fennessey**  
**[lf@prestonredman.co.uk](mailto:lf@prestonredman.co.uk)**  
Tel: 07776 653645



**Fiona Pawsey**  
**[fiona@newnham-jordan.co.uk](mailto:fiona@newnham-jordan.co.uk)**  
Tel: 07891 584843



**Nicola Lowe**  
**[Nicolalowe@hgwalker.co.uk](mailto:Nicolalowe@hgwalker.co.uk)**  
Tel: 01202 881454 or 07854 787358  
(outside office hours)

## BDLS MEMBERS' BENEFITS

Did you know as a member of BDLS, you can take advantage of the corporate rate with BH Live leisure centres? The monthly cost is £38, as opposed to the usual fee of £45. This includes use of the gym, swimming pool, spa and classes across all their sites in Bournemouth and Poole.

Please visit their website for full details <https://bhliveactive.org.uk/join>

If you would like to join, please email me at [mandy@bournemouthlaw.com](mailto:mandy@bournemouthlaw.com) and I will provide you with an email to confirm your membership with BDLS.

Please visit our website <https://www.bournemouthlaw.com/membership-benefits> to view further membership benefits

We hope to soon be able to offer further membership benefits so watch this space!



# BDLS

## LEGALRUNNER GROUP



**T**he Bournemouth Legal Runner group is up and running and many thanks to all those that have expressed interest and/or come along to one of our runs to date. Legal Runner is a nationwide running group, set up by new Law Society president, Mark Evans and intended to build a running community for those working within or alongside the legal profession. Running is such a fantastic way to switch off from the working day, and getting outside and engaging with others in the same profession can be so important for our physical and mental health.

As your Bournemouth Legal Runner representative I will be organising social runs on the **second Wednesday of each month**. We will meet in central Bournemouth after work, ready for a slow and chatty run, around 5km in distance. It is very much my intention to build an accessible and social running group, with the community and conversation being just as important as the miles. **EVERYBODY** is welcome, whatever your pace or running experience. We are incredibly lucky to have a beautiful (and flat!) stretch of coastline on our doorstep here in Bournemouth and it is a privilege to be able to enjoy this together. I also understand that with the evenings drawing in, it is only getting harder to motivate yourself to get outside after a long day in the office. Running alone in the dark can feel intimidating and unappealing. Running together as part of a community helps to build habits and supports safe and enjoyable movement through the winter months.

Alongside the monthly midweek run, you will often find me at a local parkrun (Bournemouth, Moors Valley and Brockenhurst being my favourites) and if you are interested in coming along to a parkrun and/or coordinating locations, please let me know! I am also open to any input and/or suggestions from BDLS members about dates and timings for future runs, so please do share your feedback with me and I will look to implement changes to suit as many of you as possible.

Our next social run will be on Wednesday 10 December at 5:45pm

If you are interested in getting involved please do get in touch (kate.lewis@trethowans.com) and/or contact me on LinkedIn so that I can share details of upcoming runs.

More details about the legal runner community can be found here:

Home - Legal Runner ■

**Kate Lewis**  
Bournemouth LegalRunner Group





# Legacies That Change Lives: How Local Solicitors Can Support Julia's House



**A**s legal professionals in the Bournemouth area, we are uniquely placed to make a lasting difference in our local community. Julia's House, Dorset's local children's hospice, provides specialist care for children with life-limiting and complex conditions, supporting families through some of their most challenging times. Their dedicated team delivers not only clinical expertise but also moments of joy, laughter, and respite for families who need it most – giving them all a chance to have the magical moments and memories every child and family deserves. What many may not realise is that Julia's House relies almost entirely on public support and donations to provide its essential care, with only 8 per cent of ongoing funding coming from the Government.

Legacies make up around 25 per cent of the charity's income. These gifts in Wills are vital, helping to ensure Julia's House can continue to offer its essential services now and in the future.

## The Julia's House Free Wills Service

Julia's House offers a Free Wills Service, enabling supporters aged 50 and over to write or update a simple Will at no cost. There's no obligation to leave a gift to Julia's House, but many do so after providing for their loved ones. The service is available year-round, and for joint or mirror Wills, only one partner needs to meet the age requirement. Any more complex arrangements outside the standard remit are charged directly to the client, not the charity.

## Why Should Your Firm Get Involved?

By promoting Julia's House and joining their Free Wills Service, your firm can:

- Raise awareness of a vital local cause
- Attract new clients and generate repeat business
- Help secure legacy pledges that fund one in four children and families supported by Julia's House

Over the past five years, local solicitors and Will writers have helped secure 150 legacy pledges for Julia's House through this service.

## More information

If you'd like to find out more about the Free Wills Service or how your firm can participate, please contact:

- Phone: 01202 644220
- Email: [melissa.boyns@juliashouse.org](mailto:melissa.boyns@juliashouse.org)
- Web: Leaving a gift in your Will | Julia's House

You will be helping to ensure that Julia's House is always there for the most vulnerable children and families in our community.

Thank you. ■





# The Solicitors' Charity launches The Legal Pause – a new podcast putting solicitor wellbeing first

The Solicitors' Charity has launched The Legal Pause, a brand-new podcast dedicated to supporting the wellbeing of solicitors across England and Wales. Life in law is demanding, and solicitors often put their own wellbeing behind the needs of their clients. The Legal Pause creates space to stop, reflect, and recharge through thought-provoking conversations with experts, thought leaders, and partners from across the legal sector.

Each 30-minute episode offers practical insights and inspiring perspectives on issues that matter most to today's solicitors – from managing stress and financial pressures to building emotional resilience and staying connected in a fast-changing profession. It speaks to employers, to law firms and those who can make a difference to the experience of life in the law by highlighting support routes and sources.

Hosted by Nick Gallagher, CEO of The Solicitors' Charity since 2019, the podcast draws on more than two decades of his experience leading legal charities including LawWorks, the Bar Pro Bono Unit (now Advocate) and the Personal Support Unit (now Support through Court). Nick's deep understanding of the profession ensures the podcast delivers both empathy and actionable ideas.

Nick Gallagher, CEO of The Solicitors' Charity, said: "Solicitors dedicate their careers to helping others, but too often, they do so at the expense of their own wellbeing. The Legal Pause is about giving the profession a moment to breathe – a space for open, engaging conversations that put solicitors' wellbeing first."

The Legal Pause is available now on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, and Amazon Music. Episodes are designed to fit easily into a busy routine – whether during a commute, a coffee break, or a moment away from the desk.

## Why listen to The Legal Pause?

- Expert conversations that shine a light on solicitor wellbeing in all its forms
- Practical insights solicitors can apply in everyday life and work
- A half-hour format designed to fit seamlessly into busy schedules

The podcast builds on The Solicitors' Charity's mission to provide emotional, professional, financial, and physical wellbeing support to solicitors in need, while promoting a healthier and more resilient legal profession.

Listen to The Legal Pause on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, Amazon Music, or visit the landing page here: [thesolicitorscharity.org/the-legal-pause](https://thesolicitorscharity.org/the-legal-pause). ■

# Firms' News

## Michelle Bettell joins Woodstock Legal Services

**W**oodstock Legal Services is delighted to welcome Michelle Bettell to their expanding Family Law team. Michelle joins as a Consultant Chartered Legal Executive, bringing with her over 18 years of experience and a strong reputation for expert legal guidance in family matters across the local area.

On joining Woodstock, Michelle shared her thoughts on the move: "I had been considering entering into consultancy for some time but did not want to take this leap until I found a firm with which I could consult that aligns with my values and way of working."

Michelle sees family law as a chance to make a real difference in people's lives. She combines determination with genuine care, listening to what matters most to her clients and helping them move forward. Michelle is now looking forward to contributing to the firm's continued growth while helping clients find clarity and resolution in often complex and emotional family matters. Her expertise in mediation, divorce, child disputes, and financial settlements, combined with her approachable style, makes her a pivotal addition.



Michelle Bettell

WOODSTOCK  
LEGAL SERVICES

## Woodstock Legal Services Settles into Ashley Cross

**W**oodstock Legal Services has taken another major step in its growth journey with the expansion into a new office in Ashley Cross, Poole. The Ashley Cross office gives us a second location alongside their established base in Canford Cliffs.

Woodstock support clients nationwide and have consultants based across the country, with their head offices and core internal functions rooted in the South.

The decision to expand comes during a period of significant growth. In the past year their headcount has increased by more than a third, with experienced consultants joining across a wide range of practice areas including property law and conveyancing, landlord and tenant, dispute resolution, family law, commercial law, private client and employment matters. ■

WOODSTOCK  
LEGAL SERVICES



Sally O'Donnell and Toby Khalife greeting guests at the launch of Woodstock Legal Services' Ashley Cross office



# Firms' News

## Paris Smith Celebrates Bournemouth Office Launch

Paris Smith LLP marked the opening of its new Bournemouth office with a stylish launch event at the Nici Hotel. The evening welcomed guests from across the local business and professional community, celebrating the firm's commitment to the Bournemouth area. Attendees enjoyed a selection of drinks and canapés, accompanied by the smooth sounds of a live saxophonist, which added a relaxed and elegant atmosphere to the occasion.

In his address, Huw Miles, Managing Partner of Paris Smith, spoke warmly about the firm's connection to the region: "Our physical presence allows us to more easily build and deliver long term value to the region. Our new home represents our promise to be a trusted partner to the people and businesses of Bournemouth and beyond."

Frank Prior, Lead Partner for the Bournemouth office, shared his personal reflections:



*Frank Prior reflects on his personal connection to Bournemouth during the office launch celebration*

"As someone who grew up here and went to school locally, it's incredibly meaningful to be part of bringing Paris Smith to Bournemouth. This is home, and I'm proud to help build something that will serve our community for years to come." ■



## Aldridge Brownlee - Celebrating Promotions

Aldridge Brownlee Solicitors are delighted to announce a series of promotions, recognising the outstanding contributions their team members have made to the firm and their continued commitment to delivering exceptional legal services. This year, Jo Bunton, Lesley Curtis, Tom Filleul, Lee Hooper and Kirsty Oak have been promoted to Associate.

Aldridge Brownlee congratulates all those promoted and thanks them for their continued hard work and contribution to Aldridge Brownlee's ongoing growth. ■



*L:R: Jo Bunton, Richard Hall (Partner), Lesley Curtis and Kirsty Oak*





# Firms' News

## Aldridge Brownlee Welcomes New Team Members

**A**ldridge Brownlee Solicitors are pleased to announce two new additions. Fern Thomas has joined the firm as a Solicitor in Wills, Probate and Estate Administration, bringing valuable experience to this area of law.

Meanwhile, Joanne Hyde has started her journey with the firm as a Trainee Solicitor in Family Law and is already making a positive contribution to the team.

The firm is delighted to welcome Fern and Joanne and looks forward to the expertise and energy they will bring to their respective departments. ■



*Fern Thomas*



*Joanne Hyde*



## Lester Aldridge Welcomes Five Newly Qualified Solicitors

**L**ester Aldridge is proud to congratulate its trainee solicitors on successfully completing their training contracts and qualifying as solicitors. Five newly qualified lawyers will be continuing their careers at the firm: Rebecca Summers, Katherine Chalk, Maddy Cornmell, Theo Westrip, and Milly Wheeler.

- Rebecca Summers joins the Real Estate Commercial team.
- Katherine Chalk qualifies into the International Private Client team.
- Maddy Cornmell joins the Health & Social Care team.
- Theo Westrip qualifies into the Litigation & Recoveries team.
- Milly Wheeler joins the Dispute Resolution team. ■



*L:R: Maddy Cornmell, Katherine Chalk, Milly Wheeler, Tom Alder, Rebecca Summers and Theo Westrip*

# Firms' News

## Coles Miller Solicitors opens new office in Dorchester

Coles Miller Solicitors is delighted to announce the opening of its brand new office in Dorchester. The new office is located at Prospect House Business Centre, in Poundbury, Dorchester. This move reinforces Coles Miller's commitment to making its legal services as accessible and convenient as possible for clients across the county. ■



Adriann Cormack, Stephen Peck, Emma Stagg, Tim Sque, Nick Balchin

## James Burford marks 25 years with Scott Bailey LLP

All at Scott Bailey are delighted to celebrate James Burford marking 25 years with the firm. James first joined the firm as a teenager on work experience, before officially beginning his career in August 2000! Over the years, he has become a highly respected member of the team and a leading industry expert, now serving as Partner and Head of Property.

James is well known to clients and colleagues alike for his expertise, professionalism, and dedication, as well as for his good humour and community spirit. From guiding generations of families through property transactions and supporting local businesses, to dressing up as the Easter Bunny and delivering chocolate eggs on the Lymington Highstreet every year - his contribution has been invaluable to all at Scott Bailey, and to the wider New Forest community.

Sarah Unsworth, Senior Partner at Scott Bailey, says "We are very proud to celebrate this milestone with James, and we wholeheartedly thank him for his commitment, loyalty, achievements and the wonderful memories he has brought to Scott Bailey over the past 25 years." ■



James Burford





# Firms' News

## Scott Bailey LLP announces three new Apprentice Solicitors

**W**e are delighted to announce our first-ever apprentice solicitors, Joseph Hammond, Holly Mitchell, and Benjamin Bethell, who are undertaking a Level 7 Solicitor Apprenticeship at Bournemouth University while continuing their on-the-job experience within our teams.

At Scott Bailey, we believe that the future of legal excellence is built from the ground up. In 2023, we were proud to receive the New Forest Business Partnership Award for Training & Development Business of the Year. We are committed to nurturing emerging talent, cultivating skills from within, and providing meaningful career pathways for our employees. Holly, Joe, and Benjamin already bring solid foundational knowledge and contribute greatly to the firm, having progressed from legal administration and support roles at Scott Bailey into these positions of deeper responsibility. ■



*Joseph Hammond, Holly Mitchell and Benjamin Bethell*



## Scott Bailey LLP announces two new Associate Partners

**S**cott Bailey LLP is delighted to announce the promotion of Daniel Ratcliff and Victoria Smalley to Associate Partner. Daniel and Victoria are both highly valued members of Scott Bailey's Conveyancing team, which is led by Partner and Head of Property, James Burford.

Victoria first joined Scott Bailey in 2007 as an Administrative Assistant in the Property team, before qualifying as a Licensed Conveyancer in 2016. Her reputation for exceptional client care and attention to detail has grown alongside her career.

After studying law at Southampton Solent University, Daniel built a solid career foundation in compliance and legal practice, joining Scott Bailey in 2021 as a Chartered Legal Executive, bringing with him a wealth of experience. ■





# Situations Vacant



SOLICITORS  
MEDIATORS  
NOTARIES

At Scott Bailey LLP, we're proud to be a busy, high street law firm with a strong reputation for legal excellence and a genuine commitment to our clients across various areas, including Corporate and Commercial Law, Commercial Property, Employment Law, Family Law, Private Client services, and Conveyancing

We're proud of our open, supportive culture and we think you'll feel it the moment you walk through the door. We have been recognised for our commitment to our people and our community, including:

- New Forest Business of the Year 2023
- Training & Development Award 2023
- Finalists in the 2025 Hampshire Business Awards for:  
Best Place to Work  
SME Business of the Year  
Financial & Professional Services Company of the Year

Our success means that we continue to grow, and we are excited to be offering several job opportunities predominately based in our Lympington Office.

## Property Solicitor - Commercial or Residential

We're excited to be growing our conveyancing team and looking for a property law specialist who shares our values and thrives in a collaborative, fast-paced environment.

We welcome applications from solicitors at any stage of their career who have experience in property law, whether your focus is commercial, residential, or both and where clear communication, teamwork, and a commitment to excellence define your approach.

### For experienced solicitors:

You'll have a strong track record in commercial or residential property, confidently handling complex transactions and mentoring junior team members. Strategic thinking and reliability under pressure are key.

### For early-career professionals:

You'll bring enthusiasm for property law, particularly leasehold and new-build work, along with a proactive mindset and attention to detail. You're keen to learn, grow, and manage your own caseload with guidance from experienced colleagues.

**For more information visit our website:** Property Solicitor (Commercial or Residential) - Scott Bailey Solicitors

## Litigation Solicitor / Legal Executive

Are you looking for a role where your expertise makes an impact? We are seeking a Litigation Solicitor or Legal Executive (3-4+ years PQE) to join our growing Dispute Resolution team. This is a full-time, role where you will manage a varied caseload and play a key part in developing our services.

Your work will include property litigation (boundary disputes, landlord-tenant issues, leasehold enfranchisement), commercial disputes (contracts, shareholder disagreements, professional negligence), debt recovery, and general civil litigation such as defective products and insolvency matters.

You will take ownership of existing files, build your own caseload, and you will play an active role in developing client relationships, building the department's profile, and growing our offering.

**For more information visit our website:** Litigation Fee Earner - Scott Bailey Solicitors

## Employment Lawyer

We are looking for an experienced and commercially minded Employment Law Advisor to lead and grow our employment law service. You will provide advice across all areas of employment law, manage tribunal matters, and deliver practical support to senior HR teams and business leaders. The role includes developing retained services, delivering workshops, and training, and building strong client relationships.

You will advise on all areas of employment law, including redundancies, TUPE transfers, grievance and disciplinary matters, contracts, policies, discrimination, and settlements. The role also involves handling tribunal claims, delivering workshops and training, and building strong client relationships.

We are looking for someone confident in advising SMEs and senior HR teams, experienced with both respondents and claimants, and keen to develop business opportunities and promote the firm's services.

**For more information visit our website:** Employment Lawyer - Scott Bailey Solicitors

## Private Client Solicitor

We are looking for an experienced Senior Associate Solicitor to join our highly regarded Private Client team. In this role, you will lead on complex matters, provide strategic advice to high-net-worth individuals and families, and act as a trusted advisor. You will combine technical expertise with leadership, mentoring junior colleagues and contributing to the growth and reputation of the department.

This is an opportunity to make a real impact, managing multi-generational estate planning, trusts, tax mitigation strategies, and sensitive issues such as elderly client care and Court of Protection applications.

We are seeking a qualified solicitor (England & Wales) with at least 8 years' PQE in private client law, strong leadership skills, and a proven ability to manage complex cases. STEP qualification (or working towards) is preferred.

**For more information visit our website:** Private Client Solicitor - Scott Bailey Solicitors

## Paralegal – Private Client

We are looking for an experienced Paralegal to join our busy, client-focused Private Client team. This is a fantastic opportunity to work on a wide range of matters, including wills, probate, trusts, and estate planning, while supporting senior colleagues and delivering exceptional service to our clients.

You will bring at least 5 years' experience in a legal environment (ideally private client), strong organisational skills, and a proven ability to manage complex matters under pressure. Excellent communication, attention to detail, and proficiency in MS Office and case management systems are essential. Relevant study such as Paralegal training or CILEx Foundation is required.

In this role, you will draft legal documents, liaise with clients and third parties, manage files and deadlines, and assist with research and case preparation. You will also attend client meetings and support billing and compliance processes.

**For more information visit our website:** Private Client Paralegal - Scott Bailey Solicitors

# LEGAL KNOWLEDGE IN ORGANIZATIONS

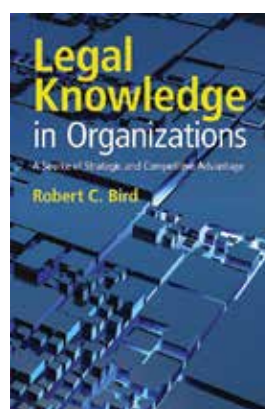
## A Source of Strategic and Competitive Advantage

Cambridge University Press

By Robert C. Bird, University of Connecticut

NEW- FROM THE CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS  
A UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE ON THE VITAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BUSINESS AND THE LAW

An appreciation by Elizabeth Robson Taylor MA of Richmond Green Chambers and Phillip Taylor MBE, Head of Chambers, Reviews Editor, "The Barrister", and Mediator



**D**oes a sophisticated grasp of legal knowledge and astuteness really count in the corporate sphere? Does it raise productivity? Does it boost profit?

The answers to these questions will vary somewhat, depending on the nature of the business and/or a variety of other relevant factors, ranging from the nature of the company's products and services, its business base, its large markets, its marketing decisions, the quality of its human resources and of course much more, including the state of the economy in which it operates.

But then, another factor inevitably comes into play - quite often ignored by a substantial number of corporate entities. Namely, it is the presence, or absence of legal knowledge — hence the title of this carefully researched and authoritative text by professor of business law, Robert C. Bird, published recently by the Cambridge University Press.

An acknowledged expert in this field, Professor Bird asserts that legal awareness adds value to an organisation in all relevant directions — a view supported by the quality and quantity of his research which supplies convincing evidence of the relevance and accuracy of his conclusions. Legal awareness, he argues, does offer a particular advantage in fiercely competitive business environments.

Nonetheless, in predictable and practical terms, he cites numerous examples of certain businesses and corporate entities (not named) where top management might not entirely agree that legal knowledge or awareness is important. It is not uncommon that some, or all levels of management in certain companies, will likely see no specific disadvantage in evading the law, ignoring the law, or breaking the law outright.

In such cases, however, there is always the possibility and the hope, that change may be encouraged on the advice of all those experienced and qualified legal experts out there, who can advise and hopefully convince — that executives in such organisations should and possibly will, support change whenever necessary, even in cases where there is a persistent tendency to avoid it. And focusing on the phenomenon of 'avoidance,' there are varied and detailed suggestions that are offered in this text as to how this can be done.

And further emphasising the topic of avoidance, (i.e. avoiding difficult issues in the hope that they'll go away) the book identifies certain 'pathways' of legal strategy from which to choose, ranging of course, from 'avoidance' (of serious issues) to 'transformation,' with the insistence that change for the better leads to better business.

For large and small businesses, from start-ups to huge corporations - - this book offers an unusual and indeed an almost unique perspective of the often symbiotic and certainly vital relationship between business and the law. For all levels of management, especially top management, this book, with its unique insights, will certainly be regarded as an essential purchase. ■

### Why come and join us?

Working at Scott Bailey means being part of a supportive, inclusive, and friendly team. We value open communication, a collaborative atmosphere, and a healthy work/life balance. Whether you are in a client-facing role or supporting our legal experts behind the scenes, you will find a fulfilling and rewarding environment where your contributions are truly valued.

### In return, we offer:

- 26 days holiday per year (plus Bank holiday)
- A bonus day off for your birthday
- Free New Forest Parking Clock
- Health Cash Plan
- Company Sick Pay Scheme (after qualifying period)
- Group Life Insurance
- 'My Staff Shop' Discount platform
- Excellent development opportunities & Progression Pathway
- Social Committee, hosting many great staff social events.
- Open and Friendly Culture
- Fabulous Location on Lymington High Street & in Lyndhurst
- Great opportunities to network and support the local community.

If you don't see a current vacancy that fits, feel free to send us your CV and a covering email – we'd love to hear from you!

To find out more about our Firm, please click here: [www.scottbailey.co.uk](http://www.scottbailey.co.uk)

To apply for any of our vacancies or to find out more, please click on this link <https://www.scottbailey.co.uk/careers> and then follow the link to the job you are interested in.

If you have any questions about any of our roles, please feel free to reach out by emailing [lyn.burley@scottbailey.co.uk](mailto:lyn.burley@scottbailey.co.uk)

## Situations Wanted

### STUDENT is looking for WORK EXPERIENCE or A VOLUNTEER ROLE

Name: Kaitlyn Talbot

Current Status: Year 10 at Poole High School, Studying psychology, history, and business at GCSE level. Child Development OCR level.

Email: [Kayxtalbot@icloud.com](mailto:Kayxtalbot@icloud.com)

Mob: 07716828476

*I am interested in gaining work experience within the law sector as part of my Year 10 placement, commencing Monday 15th June 2026 to Friday 19th June 2026. I am passionate about working with people to feel heard and to aspire my career in law, particularly supporting people with getting justice. I am planning to sit in the Public Gallery of the courts in the school holidays.*

*Please contact me for further information and a copy of my CV*

# ADOPTION LAW: A PRACTICAL GUIDE

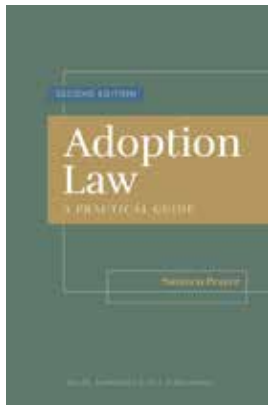
## 2nd edition

WILDY, SIMMONDS & HILL PUBLISHING

By Nasreen Pearce

AN UPDATED COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO CURRENT ADOPTION LAW FOR 2020s

An appreciation by Elizabeth Robson Taylor MA of Richmond Green Chambers and Phillip Taylor MBE, Head of Chambers, Reviews Editor, "The Barrister", and Mediator



**F**or law students and practitioners alike, there has been concern in recent years that some fundamental reform of the law of adoption is urgently needed. We welcome the new, second edition of "Adoption Law: A Practical Guide" by Nasreen Pearce from Wildy, Simmonds and Hill Publishing for 2025.

The title arrives at an interesting time for the modern development of adoption as the strains on the system continue to show. Wildy have provided us again with another excellent book in their practical guide series of titles. We thank Nasreen Pearce for her wise counsel in offering a comprehensive guide to the law, practice, and procedure for lawyers, adoption

agencies, support services and other professional bodies who are concerned with adoption for a wide readership. It can make all the difference to the advice we give clients.

For practitioners new to the work, the author covers each stage of the adoption process, including what are difficult issues of contact between the child and their birth parents. It includes the alternative options available by reference to the relevant case law and regulations in relation to domestic adoptions as well as adoptions involving overseas jurisdictions.

The title considers registration of adoption and the sensitive issue of disclosure of information which are explaining in straightforward terms to both knowledgeable readers and those new to this subject. Pearce explains the rights of those parties to challenge decisions made by the professional bodies involved in the process so do use the detailed index at the back for any specific areas you are interested in exploring further.

Nasreen Pearce in updating the second edition has included important developments in this principal area of family law for those wishing to adopt. The book looks at the impact of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms on all aspects of the law relating to adoption.

As we expect with all Wildy guides, recent case law has been included in areas such as the notification to fathers and the child's birth families of any plans to place a child for adoption. We are grateful for the inclusion of the procedure relating to preparation before proceedings begin, and the procedure for applications in the Family Court and, where relevant, the High Court.

The book also includes case law citations in relation to placement orders. It covers leave to revoke a placement order and to oppose adoption and post-placement arrangements for contact. The text sets out new coverage of post-placement contact, and post-adoption contact details to update advisers. The commentary covers recent reports and research plus the important decision in R & C (Adoption or Fostering) [2024].

We also found the inclusion of two recent lectures by the President of the Family Division on the modern approach to adoption and open adoption to be of great additional assistance. ■

# CHILD CARE AND PROTECTION

## Law and Practice

## 7th edition

WILDY, SIMMONDS & HILL PUBLISHING

By Safda Mahmood and Julie Doughty

A COMPREHENSIVE SHORT GUIDE COVERING CHILD CARE AND PROTECTION FOR THE BUSY FAMILY LAW PRACTITIONER

An appreciation by Elizabeth Robson Taylor MA of Richmond Green Chambers and Phillip Taylor MBE, Head of Chambers, Reviews Editor, "The Barrister", and Mediator



**S**afda Mahmood and Julie Doughty have edited this popular family law title from Wildy for 2024. The book has been extensively updated to provide practical guidance over the complexities arising from the Children Act 1989 which we have found most helpful.

The book examines subsequent child protection legislation, guidance and case law for both established practitioners and those new to the subject.

Among the developments included in this edition are the changes brought about by the Public Law Outline in January 2023 to

family justice, particularly in relation to expert evidence, time limits, care plans and delay.

In addition, the editors explore the law surrounding deprivation of liberty as it relates to children, regarding the interface between care proceedings and Article 5 ECHR, and consideration of key case law, such as Re T (A Child) [2021]. They cover the revision of important Practice Directions, such as PD12A (Care and Supervision Proceedings and other Part 4 Proceedings: Guide to Case Management), Child Arrangements Programme (PD 12(B), and Revised PD12J – Domestic Abuse and Child Arrangements, Pilot Reporting and Private Law Review.

As is to be expected with all Wildy practitioner titles, there are significant case law developments in children law which are set out since publication of the last edition, together with a review of the revised edition of "Working Together to Safeguard Children" (2023), which has changed the position in relation to safeguarding and child death reviews, as well as assessments.

Legal commentators have rightly welcomed this book for the breadth of the legal topics covered, plus their application and use within family practice. The specific references and analysis on updating legislative provisions, regulations, practice guidance, and case law are very well covered in our view.

Mahmood and Doughty offer us a break-down of the issues that one must bear in mind in each chapter, so all we need to do is read it, apply it, and reap the benefits. And we described the last edition as "the practitioner's friend during these times of increasing changes and revision in child law proceedings, plus the ever re-modelling of our process as more and more legislation and guidance is produced". Ever more so now, as the authors have done that again, brilliantly, to keep us up to date! Thank you. ■



# From precedent libraries to prompts

## The next step for legal drafting

Almost every lawyer maintains a Precedent Library, collections of letters, documents, and draft orders that serve as reliable templates for routine legal tasks. Whether housed centrally within a firm or kept individually by lawyers, precedent banks save time, promote consistency, and ensure that essential information is communicated accurately. They prevent lawyers from having to repeatedly craft the same content from scratch.

Yet while precedents are widely used, most lawyers do not yet have something that may soon become equally indispensable: a bank of prompts for automated legal drafting. A prompt is a set of instructions given to artificial intelligence, essentially a command or description designed to generate a specific output such as a document, letter, or analysis. Writing a good prompt is much like instructing a trainee solicitor: the instructions must be clear, unambiguous, and thorough. The more detail the prompt contains, the higher the quality of the result. These prompts often include instructions that might seem obvious, such as avoiding Americanised spellings, but are crucial for consistent outputs.

My recent move from private practice to a role with LEAP, a legal technology company specialising in case management software, has given me a new perspective on both precedents and prompts. As Head of Family Law, I now help shape the software to better support family lawyers. Leaving practice meant leaving behind 18 years' worth of carefully curated precedents; I was hardly going to commit intellectual property theft to take them with me. Instead, I now work closely with LEAP's precedent libraries, which contain a wide range of template letters and documents designed to streamline legal workflows.

In exploring these templates, I have begun adapting and creating precedents that offer enhanced automation. One example is a letter of instruction to an actuary, which not only pulls through key case details but also uses LEAP's Word Add-in to offer dynamic questions. The lawyer indicates, for instance, whether a report is ordered or agreed, and the remainder of the letter changes automatically. This creates a more sophisticated tool than a static template, one that reduces repetitive drafting and accelerates routine tasks.

But this still raises an obvious question: what if technology could answer those questions itself by analysing information within the case file? This is where prompts rather than precedents begin to show their potential.

When I joined LEAP, I had limited experience with AI prompting. My early use of ChatGPT had been purely personal, such as asking

it for the correct reading order of John le Carré's George Smiley novels. The idea of drafting complex legal instructions for AI was daunting; it seemed faster simply to type the letters myself. Yet the capability of AI systems to read and interpret case data changes that calculation. In theory, AI could identify pensions, values, dates, or factual circumstances directly from the matter, eliminating the need for manual data entry. A precedent could therefore evolve into a prompt, an automated set of rules that instructs AI on how to assemble the necessary document.

Once created, a prompt could be reused just like a precedent. It could tell the AI to consider the Pensions Advisory Group guidance, relevant Practice Directions, or even the terms of a specific court order. It could dictate formatting, tone, style, and legal framing. After the prompt runs within the secure environment of the case management system, the lawyer would receive a completed draft ready for review.

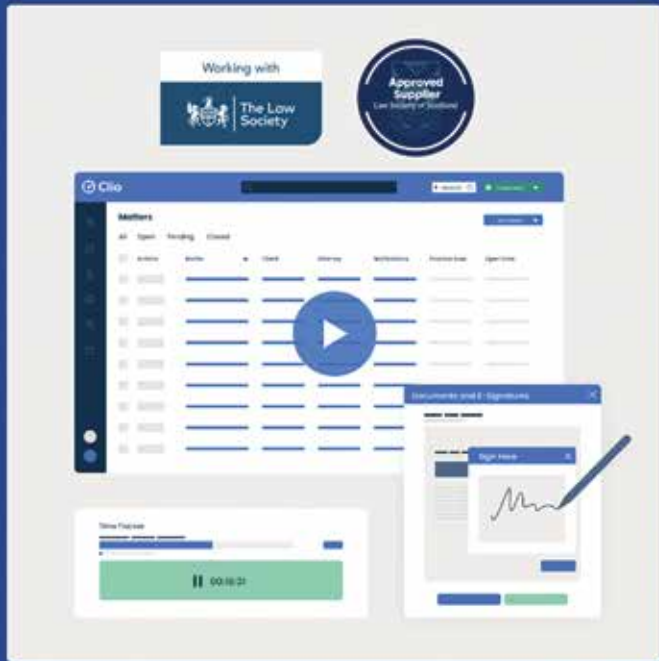
Another example is the preparation of briefs to counsel. Traditional precedents can pull basic information such as names, dates of birth, or case identifiers. But a prompt could go much further. It could analyse the matter file, summarise the children's arrangements, extract the current issues in dispute, and compile the factual background. This would not replace the lawyer's judgement, but it would provide a first draft similar to the one a trainee might prepare on their first day, only produced in seconds rather than an hour.

Artificial Intelligence is already reshaping legal practice, whether lawyers embrace it or not. The familiar saying captures the trend well: "AI won't replace lawyers, but a lawyer using AI will." Replacing or supplementing precedents with prompts is one way to harness the benefits of AI while preserving the lawyer's expertise, oversight, and control. Just as precedents did not replace lawyers, prompts will not either. Instead, they represent a natural evolution in how we create, structure, and automate legal drafting in an increasingly digital profession.



**Read our White Paper**  
[Artificial Intelligence \(AI\):  
Optimising law firm profitability  
in six simple steps](#)

**Katie Phillips**  
Head of Family Law in LEAP Verticals



# The Hidden Cost of Standing Still: Why Law Firms Can't Afford "Business as Usual"

**I**n today's legal market, tradition alone won't keep your firm competitive. Many solicitors are unknowingly paying a steep price for clinging to outdated systems—lost time, frustrated staff, and missed opportunities. The truth? "Business as usual" is costing far more than change ever will.

## Outdated Systems Drain More Than Just Time

Every hour spent wrestling with clunky software is an hour not spent serving clients or bringing in new business. Across the UK, lawyers still report spending the bulk of their working day on non-billable tasks. The result? Burnt-out teams, dissatisfied clients, and firms falling behind.

## Your Staff Deserve Better Tools

The tools you give your people directly impact their job satisfaction. Legacy systems that crash, lag, or make simple processes unnecessarily complex don't just slow things down—they chip away at morale. Cloud-based legal practice management systems, on the other hand, make collaboration seamless, improve wellbeing, and free up lawyers to focus on meaningful work.

## The Risk You Can't See: Compliance and Security

If your software hasn't had a major update in years, you're at risk. GDPR compliance, data security, and operational resilience aren't "nice-to-haves"—they're the bare minimum clients expect. Modern solutions like Clio are built with these needs in mind, offering peace of mind alongside performance.

## Why Forward-Thinking Firms Are Switching to Clio

For firms in Hampshire, the choice is simple: continue absorbing the hidden costs of outdated technology, or invest in a platform designed for modern legal practice. With Clio, firms gain:

- Efficiency at scale – Automate routine tasks and reclaim billable hours.
- Happier teams – Empower staff with intuitive, reliable software.
- Future-proof security – Stay compliant, safe, and resilient.
- Better client service – Onboard clients quickly and communicate seamlessly.

## The Cost of Doing Nothing

Ask yourself: How much is inefficiency already costing your firm? Slower onboarding? Errors creeping in? Time wasted juggling multiple tools?

When you put numbers against these inefficiencies, the real expense becomes clear. And it's usually far greater than the investment in modern software.

The firms thriving today aren't necessarily the biggest, they're the ones willing to adapt. If you're ready to see what smarter systems could mean for your practice, book a quick walkthrough of Clio and see how it can help your firm work smarter, not harder. ■

**Sarah Murphy,**  
General Manager of Clio EMEA



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