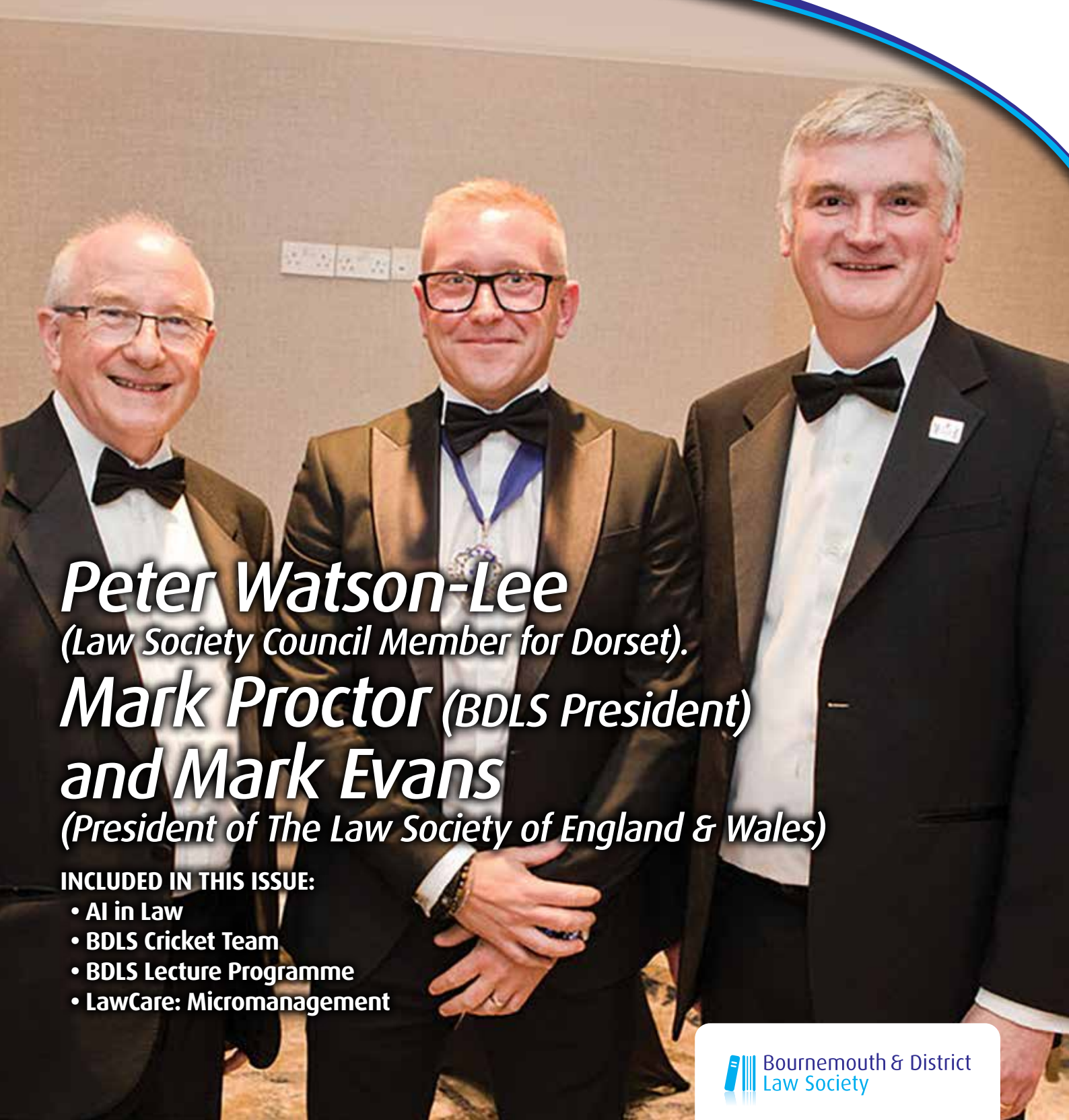


Bournemouth & District Lawyer



Peter Watson-Lee

(Law Society Council Member for Dorset).

Mark Proctor *(BDLS President)*

and Mark Evans

(President of The Law Society of England & Wales)

INCLUDED IN THIS ISSUE:

- AI in Law
- BDLS Cricket Team
- BDLS Lecture Programme
- LawCare: Micromanagement



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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
Autumn	September 2026	30 August 2026
Winter	December 2026	
Spring	March 2027	
Summer	June 2027	

The copy deadline for receipt at the BDLS office for the next edition – the Summer issue – will be **30th August 2026**.

We welcome your firms' news and any advertisements. Please send to office@bournemouthlaw.com.



Follow us on LinkedIn

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/5483197/admin/>

COVER INFORMATION

Peter Watson-Lee, Law Society Council Member for Dorset, Mark Proctor, BDLS President, and Mark Evans, President of The Law Society of England & Wales

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BDLS DIARY 2026/27

Mon 15 June 2026	BDLS Annual General Meeting at The Captains Club Hotel, Christchurch
Fri 28 August 2026	BDLS Summer BBQ at The Highcliff Marriott Hotel, Bournemouth
Thur 8 - Sun 11 Oct 2026	BDLS European Conference to Gibraltar
Wed 4 Nov 2026	Newly Qualified/Trainee Drinks Reception at Urban Garden, Bournemouth
Fri 27 Nov 2026	BDLS Christmas Wine Tasting at Marsham Court Hotel, Bournemouth
Wed 10 Feb 2027	BDLS Annual Lunch at The Pavilion, Westover Road, Bournemouth
Fri 23 April 2027	BDLS Annual Dinner at The Highcliff Marriott Hotel, Bournemouth

The President's Column

Mark Proctor



As my presidential year with the Bournemouth & District Law Society draws to a close, I find myself reflecting on what has been an incredibly rewarding and memorable 12 months. The time has passed remarkably quickly, yet it has been filled with moments that truly highlight the strength, collegiality and spirit of our local legal community.

It has been a privilege to serve as President, and I am deeply grateful to the many people who have supported me throughout the year. My sincere thanks go to my colleagues at Aldridge Brownlee, whose encouragement and flexibility have enabled me to undertake this role. I am equally indebted to our dedicated General Committee for their hard work, enthusiasm and unwavering support, and to Mandy Heath, our Society Manager, whose organisation and commitment are at the heart of everything we achieve.

This year has been marked by a number of standout events. Our Annual Law Society Dinner was a particular highlight, welcoming 200 attendees for a truly memorable evening. We were honoured to be joined by our guest speaker, Mark Evans, National Law Society President, whose insights were both engaging and inspiring. The evening concluded in spectacular fashion with the brilliant singing waiters, ensuring a lively and unforgettable end to the night.

We also enjoyed a sell-out Annual Lunch, where the Rev Richard Coles entertained us with his wit and warmth, making it another occasion to remember. Beyond our own events, it has been a pleasure to represent the Society at

the annual dinners of our neighbouring law societies in the Isle of Wight, Hampshire and Dorset, strengthening the connections that are so important within our profession.

As I look back, I am struck not only by how much we have accomplished, but by how fortunate I have been to meet and work alongside so many dedicated professionals. This role has reinforced for me the importance of community within the legal profession and the value of coming together to share knowledge, support one another and celebrate our successes.

It now gives me great pleasure to congratulate Adrian Falck as he becomes the 107th President at our AGM in June. I have no doubt that the Society will continue to thrive under his leadership, and I wish him every success in the year ahead.

Finally, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to all members of the Bournemouth & District Law Society for your support, encouragement and engagement throughout my presidential year. It has been an honour to serve you.

Thank you all for making this such a special and memorable year. ■

Mark Proctor
BDLS President

BDLS Theatre Outing: *Legally Blonde*

at the Mayflower, Southampton - February 2026

BDLS Theatre Outing: Legally Blonde at the Mayflower, Southampton

In February, 38 members of the Bournemouth & District Law Society enjoyed a wonderfully lively evening out at the Mayflower Theatre to see the vibrant and uplifting production of *Legally Blonde*.

We began the evening with a relaxed pre theatre gathering over pizza, giving everyone a chance to catch up and unwind. The production of *Legally Blonde* did not disappoint. Packed with colour, comedy and fabulous choreography, the cast delivered a performance that kept the entire audience captivated from curtain-up to final bow. Many of our members commented on the impressive vocals, slick staging and the sheer feel good factor that radiated throughout the theatre.

The trip offered a welcome opportunity not only to enjoy a great show but also to strengthen connections within our legal community. A big thank you goes to everyone who joined us and helped make the event such a success. We look forward to planning many more opportunities to bring our members together—on and off the stage! ■

MANDY HEATH
BDLS Society Manager



Amy Cousineau Massey, Anna Curtis, Marie Harder and Katie Owen



Asya Panchaliev, Raluca Parker, Ann Herd, Sarah Unsworth, Anna Curtis, Sue and Mark Kiteley



Eloise Butterworth, Victoria Hewitt and John Rawlings, Amy Cousineau Massey

BDLS Annual Dinner

at the Highcliff Marriott Hotel, Bournemouth - Friday 24 April 2026

BDLS hosted its prestigious Annual Dinner on Friday 24 April at the elegant Highcliff Marriott Hotel on Bournemouth's West Cliff, welcoming almost 200 guests from across the legal profession for an evening of celebration, fine dining and connection.

Society President, Mark Proctor, opened the evening by welcoming the top table guests and expressing sincere thanks to our sponsors for their invaluable and continued support.

The evening's distinguished guest speaker was Mark Evans, President of the Law Society of England & Wales, who delivered an engaging and insightful address. He thanked the local legal community for its incredible work and stressed the importance and value of local law societies. He shared an update on the work of the Law Society and outlined his Presidential priorities: ensuring a profession fit for the future, championing members and supporting wellbeing. Mark also highlighted the vital work of LawCare, emphasising the support it offers to those working across the legal profession. In a particularly resonant part of his speech, he encouraged open conversations about imposter syndrome and reminded members not to give up on their goals, no matter how ambitious they may seem.

Just as guests thought the formalities were coming to an end, the atmosphere shifted with a delightful and unexpected surprise. The Silver Service Waiters, who had seamlessly blended into the dining experience throughout the evening, suddenly broke into a vibrant and entertaining musical performance. Their high energy act filled the room with laughter and applause and proved to be one of the most memorable moments of the night. The highlight was undoubtedly a conga that wound its way around the room, led by Mark Evans, President of the Law Society of England & Wales, with participants sporting the rather cool College Chambers' branded sunglasses - a truly magnificent sight!

BDLS extends heartfelt thanks to everyone who attended and to our generous sponsors whose support ensures the continued success of this flagship event: ■

Kindly sponsored by:



Photos taken by Zeld of Studio Shotz can be found here:
<https://studioshotz.pixieset.com/bournemouthlawdinner26/>



Ashley Hinwood, Michael Newbold and Andy Jones



Sam Linford, Emma Hamilton Cole, Neil White and Mark Proctor



Kelly Payne and Dan Francis

BDSL Annual Dinner

at the Highcliff Marriott Hotel, Bournemouth - Friday 24 April 2026



Suzanne Kadziola, Paul Davies, Anne Watson-Lee and Mandy Heath



Elizabeth Bowden, J-P Schulz, Luka Maxted-Page and Nicola Peach



Jeremy Channon, Nick Davies and Craig Hardman



Michelle Bettell, Rosanna Parker, Roisin Fisher, Amy Baugh and Carly Jermyn



Julian Heath, Roger Leedham and David McWilliam



Melissa Lovell-Bond, Kerry Boshier, Deborah Fenton, Oliver Brady, Rachel Reynolds, Stephanie Bellamy and Kerry Houston-Kypta

BDSL Annual Dinner

at the Highcliff Marriott Hotel, Bournemouth - Friday 24 April 2026



Andrew Carswell, Louise Burn, Richard Hall and Owen Baker



The Singing Waiters entertaining guests with a surprise performance.



Marie Harder, Richard Perrins, Sophia Haine, Jenny Oxley and Katie Owen



Conor Maher, Ana Dilling, Michael Newbold, Mark Kiteley, Mark Evans, Neil White, Mark Proctor, Emma Hamilton Cole, Adrian Falck and Peter Watson-Lee



Mark Evans, President, The Law Society of England & Wales



Adrian Falck and Mark Lello

BDLS

Annual General Meeting

Monday 15 June 2026

Captains Club Hotel, Wick Ferry, Christchurch, Dorset BH23 1HU

- Venue:** Captains Club Hotel, Wick Ferry, Christchurch, Dorset BH23 1HU
- Cost:** FREE OF CHARGE. PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS PRESENTATION IS AVAILABLE TO MEMBERS OF THIS SOCIETY ONLY
- 16:30** Registration – tea/coffee/biscuits
- 17:00** **CO-PILOT FOR LEADERS**
Jonny Bush, Enhanced
- A practical overview of AI and what it means for modern leadership.
 - Demystifying Microsoft’s AI terminology: What “Copilot for Microsoft 365” is and where it shows up day-to-day.
 - Privacy, security and permissions: How Copilot uses organisational data you already have access to.
 - Real workflows in Microsoft 365:
 - Outlook for summarising threads and drafting replies faster.
 - Word for drafting and refining briefs and documents.
 - Teams for meeting recap, actions and follow-ups.
 - How you can use Copilot to improve decision-making and internal communication.
- 17:45** **SUPPORTING THE PROFESSION IN 2026**
Nick Gallagher, CEO, The Solicitors’ Charity
- 18:00** **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**
A short AGM to find out what is happening locally.
AGM papers will be emailed to members separately.
- 18:15** Drinks reception – Canapés with wine/soft drinks

Please book online at:

<https://www.bournemouthlaw.com/bournemouth-district-law-society-lectures>

BDLS

Annual Lunch

Wednesday 10 February 2027

The Pavilion Ballroom, Westover Road, Bournemouth



Guest Speaker

Nigel Havers

We are delighted to announce that our speaker for next year's Annual Lunch will be the acclaimed actor **Nigel Havers**.

With a career spanning over five decades, Nigel is best known for his roles in the Oscar winning Chariots of Fire and Empire of the Sun, the iconic television drama The Singing Detective, and popular television series including Downton Abbey, Don't Wait Up and Coronation Street. More recently, he co hosted Posh Hotels with Sally & Nigel and also played his grandfather, Judge Cecil Havers, in the drama Ruth Ellis: A Cruel Love.

An engaging and accomplished speaker, he promises an entertaining afternoon filled with fascinating stories from stage and screen.

Please note the date - full details and booking information will be advertised in the Autumn. ■

BDLS Celebrate Summer with BDLS - BBQ and Band

Friday 28 August 2026

Highcliff Marriot Hotel, Bournemouth

We would be delighted for you to join Bournemouth & District Law Society for a relaxed and sociable summer evening at the Highcliff Marriott Hotel in Bournemouth. The hotel are opening this event up to their corporate clients and BDLS will be booking places so that members can attend together as a group.

Date: Friday 28 August 2026

Venue: Bournemouth Highcliff Marriott Hotel,
105 St Michael's Road, Bournemouth

Arrival: 7.30pm

BBQ: 8.00 pm

Live Music from Neon Rhythm

Enjoy an energetic live performance from Neon Rhythm, a Hampshire-based function band known for their lively sets and feel-good atmosphere. Covering music across the decades, they bring something for everyone and guarantee a great party vibe

BBQ, Music & Fireworks

Enjoy a delicious BBQ, live music and watch the spectacular fireworks display from Bournemouth Pier to round off the evening.

Price: £37.00 per person

If you would like to attend as part of the BDLS group, please let us know and we will arrange the booking on your behalf. Email me at mandy@bournemouthlaw.com to reserve your places.



Live music from Neon Rhythm



Bournemouth & District Junior Lawyers Division



As we begin to enjoy the brighter evenings and busy social calendar that summer brings, it has been fantastic to see such strong engagement from our members across both our professional and social events.

Since my last update, we have hosted a variety of events which have allowed members to connect in both formal and informal settings. Our pottery painting evening at All Fired Up proved to be a hugely enjoyable and relaxed event, giving attendees the chance to unwind creatively while catching up with colleagues and making new connections. Likewise, our introductory climbing session at Project Climbing Centre Poole was a great success, with members embracing the challenge enthusiastically and supporting one another throughout the evening. It was particularly encouraging to see first-time attendees getting involved and stepping outside their comfort zones in such a welcoming environment.

As part of our continued efforts to raise awareness of the JLD and increase engagement, we have also recently invested in a new JLD banner for use at our events. Featuring information about the Division alongside links to our social media platforms, the banner has already helped improve our visibility and provides attendees with an easy way to stay connected with upcoming events, updates, and opportunities.

In March, we welcomed a fantastic turnout to our cheese and wine networking evening at Marsham Court. The event provided an excellent opportunity for members and non-members alike to expand their professional networks, and we were delighted by the positive feedback received afterwards. Of course, huge thanks go to Wilson and Roe, whose continued support of junior lawyers in the region made the event possible.

Our long-awaited Pump Court Chambers event also took place this spring at Steele Raymond. The evening featured insightful updates across employment, family, and property law, delivered by an excellent panel of speakers. We are grateful to everyone involved in organising and presenting the event, which was both informative and engaging. It was particularly rewarding to see strong attendance from trainees, students, and newly qualified professionals keen to broaden their understanding across different practice areas.

Most recently, we enjoyed a fantastic day at Salisbury Racecourse for our Bank Holiday horse racing event, kindly sponsored by 3PB. With a country and western theme, the event brought together members from across the local legal community for an afternoon of networking, entertainment, and plenty of fun. The atmosphere throughout the day was excellent, despite concerns about the weather.

We are currently exploring plans for a future “sip and paint” evening following the popularity of our earlier creative events, with further details to be announced in due course.

Alongside our social events, supporting our Charity of the Year, In Jolly Good Company, remains an important focus for the committee. Several committee members will be volunteering with the charity within their allotment spaces, supporting the incredible community work they undertake to tackle loneliness and social isolation across Dorset. We are very much looking forward to becoming more involved with the charity throughout the year and supporting its initiatives wherever possible.

Meanwhile, preparations continue for our much anticipated Summer Ball, which promises to be another standout event in the calendar. We are keeping our fingers firmly crossed that BCP Council announces the return of the Bournemouth fireworks display this year, particularly as we are fortunate enough to have what we believe will be one of the best viewing spots at Key West on Bournemouth Pier.

The committee also continues to focus on strengthening relationships internally as we plan for the months ahead. Our next committee meeting will follow a team bonding evening of padel and pizza at Cross Court Padel in



Members scaling new heights at our climbing social evening.



Future lawyer in the making at our pottery painting evening

Poole, which we hope will provide a fun opportunity for committee members to connect outside of the usual meeting environment while continuing to develop ideas for future events and initiatives. ■

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



AI IN LAW: WHAT THE TECHNOLOGY IS EXPOSING ABOUT RESPONSIBILITY AND CONTROL

The real lesson from AI in law isn't about technology

It was a genuine privilege to spend time recently with members of the Bournemouth & District Law Society, delivering a session on The Practical Use of AI in Legal Practice. What stayed with me afterwards was not simply the strength of attendance and engagement, but the tone of the room. There was a seriousness to the discussion that felt important. The questions were thoughtful, often probing, and grounded in real world concerns rather than abstract curiosity. This was not a group looking for easy answers or quick wins. It was a group seeking to understand what this technology actually means for their work, their responsibilities, and ultimately their clients.

That distinction matters.

The conversation the profession needs to have about AI has moved on. It is no longer about whether these tools exist, or whether they might be useful at some future point. It is about how they are already shaping legal workflows, often in ways that are not fully visible, and how they are beginning to challenge assumptions the profession has historically relied upon. This is not hypothetical. It is happening now.

When even the best firms get it wrong

Recent headlines involving Sullivan & Cromwell have once again brought AI into sharp focus. A leading global firm, with exceptional lawyers and long established processes, found itself under scrutiny after AI generated hallucinations appeared in a filing.

The instinctive reaction is to treat incidents like this as failures of technology: to conclude that AI is unreliable, cannot be trusted, or simply requires better training. But that framing is too simple, and ultimately unhelpful. What these incidents reveal is not primarily a

failure of AI, nor merely a failure of training. They point to something deeper about how legal work is structured, supervised and delivered and how it has been evolving for some time.

AI has not created this shift. It has accelerated it, and in doing so, made it more visible.

AI as an amplifier, not a cause

Lawyers have always worked within systems shaped by pressure, delegation and, at times, imperfect oversight. Deadlines compress judgment. Billing models influence behaviour. Work is distributed across teams with varying levels of experience, often with limited time for deep verification.

In that context, the idea that every legal output is consistently the product of careful, linear and fully supervised reasoning is, at best, an aspiration rather than a reality. What AI changes is the environment in which those systems operate. It allows outputs to be generated faster. It makes them more coherent, structured and persuasive. It removes some of the visible friction that once signalled uncertainty or incompleteness, enabling work to be produced at a pace that would previously have been difficult to achieve.

At the same time, it raises the stakes. When those outputs are wrong, they are often wrong in ways that are less obvious and more consequential. Errors can be embedded within otherwise convincing material. Weak reasoning can be masked by strong presentation. Assumptions can pass unchallenged because they are no longer immediately visible. In that sense, AI does not create risk. Instead, it exposes it.

The question of control

There remains a comforting narrative within the profession that lawyers

are firmly in control of these systems. The idea of being the “human in the loop” suggests a clear hierarchy: the machine assists, while the lawyer directs, supervises and decides. That narrative is reassuring. It is also, in many cases, incomplete.

In an AI enabled legal system, the lawyer’s role risks shifting in a subtle but important way. Not from controller to passive observer, but from controller to the point at which responsibility ultimately sits. The individual who signs off, and therefore the individual who absorbs failure when systems do not perform as expected.

The law continues to look for a person: a name on a document, someone who can stand behind the work. Yet the way legal work is now produced is increasingly complex. Tasks are disaggregated. Processes are distributed. Outputs are shaped by combinations of people, tools, systems and, increasingly, AI models operating at scale. Responsibility, however, has not evolved in the same way.

The system may be distributed. Responsibility is not. This creates a structural tension and one that has always existed to some degree, but which AI is now making much harder to ignore.

Why this moment matters

What was particularly encouraging in Bournemouth was a clear recognition of this tension. There was an understanding that the issue is not simply whether AI is accurate or whether it saves time. The deeper question is how it interacts with a professional framework that still requires individual judgment, accountability and control.

The conversation is beginning to shift from capability to consequence - from “what can this do?” to “what does it mean that it can do this?” That is a far more important conversation for the profession.

Looking ahead

This piece has been about stepping back from the headlines and asking what they are really telling us - not just about AI as a technology, but about the profession itself. About how legal work is produced, how responsibility is exercised, and how control is understood in increasingly complex and distributed systems.

If recent developments have clarified what is being revealed about behaviour, responsibility and professional structures, the next question is how lawyers and organisations should respond. Recognising the issue is one thing. Designing a response that is proportionate, practical and sustainable is another entirely.

In the next part of this piece, I explore that question in more detail: what it means to develop real capability, how to move beyond experimentation, and how to approach AI in a way that is both practical and professionally grounded.

Part 2 will be published in the Autumn Edition of Bournemouth Lawyer. In the meantime, if these are conversations your firm knows it ought to be having, it is worth approaching them now in a structured and considered way. Please do get in touch to continue the conversation.



Akber Dattoo

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BDSL Lecture Programme 2026

KEY:

LIVE WEBINARS

FACE TO FACE LECTURES

Kindly sponsored by



DATE AND TIME	LECTURE	FORMAT	LECTURER	VENUE
2026				
9 June 2026 14:00 – 17:15	How To Make More Money Whilst Working Smarter (Not Harder)	Face to Face	Jay Sahota	Marsham Court Hotel
10 June 2026 11:00 – 12:00	Commonhold - The Holy Grail: A Move Away From External Landlord Arrangements Into a World Of Bliss Harmonious Community Living!	Live Webinar	Matt Lewis	Zoom
17 June 2026 09:15 – 16:30	Family Law Conference	Face to Face	Various	Marsham Court Hotel
24 June 2026 14:00 – 17:15	IHT Planning on Pensions, in lifetime estate planning and estate administration	Face to Face	John Bunker	Marsham Court Hotel
15 July 2026 09:15 -16:45	Compliance Conference	Face to Face	Various	Marsham Court Hotel
9 and 10 September 2026 09:30 – 17:00	Residential Conveyancing for Support Staff	Face to Face	Ian Quayle	Marsham Court Hotel
1 October 2026 TBC	Private Client Conference	Face to Face	Various	Queens Hotel
5 October 2026 11:00- 13:00	The regulatory landscape – recent findings from SRA inspections and what the transition to FCA regulation will look and feel like	Live Webinar	Eloise Butterworth, HiveRisk	Zoom
6 October 2026 13:30 – 16:45	Conveyancing Law Update	Face to Face	Richard Snape	Queens Hotel

BDLS Lecture Programme 2026 (cont.)

DATE AND TIME	LECTURE	FORMAT	LECTURER	VENUE
15 October 2026 11:00- 12:00	Leading With Focus: Managing Overwhelm, Time & Your Team Effectively	Live Webinar	Jess Wiggins	Zoom
20 October 2026 13:30 – 16:45	Practical AI – Title to be confirmed	Face to Face	Akber Dattoo	TBC
3 November 2026 11:00 – 12:00	Topic to be confirmed	Live Webinar	Richard Snape	Zoom
12 November 2026 09:30 – 12:45	Topic to be confirmed	Face to Face	Helen Foster	Marsham Court Hotel
12 November 2026 14:00 – 17:15	Topic to be confirmed	Face to Face	Helen Foster	Marsham Court Hotel
25 November 2026 TBC	Property Law Conference	Face to Face	Various	Queens Hotel

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

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.

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 2026

LECTURE Tuesday 9 June 2026 – 14:00 – 17:15

Topic	HOW TO MAKE MORE MONEY WHILST WORKING SMARTER (NOT HARDER)
Lecturer	Jay Sahota
Venue	Marsham Court Hotel, Bournemouth
Cost	£90 – Member and Associate Members of BDLS/Trainees (Solicitors; Cilex; Apprentices) £140 – Non Member of BDLS

■ This session is designed to help lawyers and legal teams increase profitability without increasing their hours. Delegates will learn how to price confidently, manage clients more effectively and streamline the way they work so they can deliver high quality service with less stress and more reward. This session will cover:

- ✓ Better Pricing Strategies
 - Understanding the true value of your expertise
 - Moving away from undervaluing fixed fees or hourly rates
 - Pricing for outcomes, not effort
 - How to have confident fee conversations with clients
- ✓ Smarter Time Recording
- ✓ Accurate Estimating & Scoping
 - Setting clear boundaries at the outset of a matter
- ✓ Effective Client Management
 - Setting expectations early to avoid firefighting later
 - Managing difficult behaviours in a commercially sensible way
- ✓ Productivity Techniques That Actually Work
- ✓ Messaging
 - Presenting your services so clients see value rather than cost
 - Improving website, email and proposal clarity
 - Building trust and authority through subtle language changes
- ✓ Building Self Worth in Your Professional Role
 - Shifting from “I’m grateful for the work” to “My expertise is worth paying for”
 - Handling imposter syndrome around fees
 - Developing commercial confidence without feeling “salesy”
- ✓ Confident, Consistent Billing



Jay Sahota

WEBINAR Wednesday 10 June 2026 – 11:00 – 12:00

Topic	COMMONHOLD - THE HOLY GRAIL: A MOVE AWAY FROM EXTERNAL LANDLORD ARRANGEMENTS INTO A WORLD OF BLISS HARMONIOUS COMMUNITY LIVING!
Lecturer	Matt Lewis
Cost	£40 – Member and Associate Members of BDLS/Trainees (Solicitors; Cilex; Apprentices) £60 – Non Member of BDLS

■ What now & next!?!..... all the announcements, consultation documents, Acts and Bills! Where are we now with lease extensions, enfranchisement, service charges, ground rents, forfeiture, and tenure reform? In addition, what about critical peripheral reforms in the leasehold conveyancing space such as administration charges and the supply of information on sales, LPE1?

Following the introduction of “LAFRA”, the release of a draft Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Bill, ongoing LAFRA judicial review proceedings, a series of secondary legislation, further announcements, consultation documents, and evidence giving in the Commons, this session will look at the headlines relevant to property lawyers, with a specific emphasis on residential conveyancing of leasehold interests.

As well as exploring the headlines, identifying the parts of all of this that have been introduced, and what conveyancers can be doing now to get ahead, in this short session, Matt will look to update with the latest consultation documents, and announcements, along with the future reform agenda to enable those attending to consider how they may adapt to these changes now.



Matt Lewis

Summary of Upcoming Lectures and Webinars 2026

LECTURE Wednesday 17 June 2026 – 09:15 – 16:30

Topic	FAMILY LAW CONFERENCE
Lecturer	Various
Venue	Marsham Court Hotel, Bournemouth
Cost	£125 – Member and Associate Members of BDLS/Trainees (Solicitors; Cilex; Apprentices) £175 – Non Member of BDLS (To include lunch and refreshments)

■ We have an exciting line up of speakers including:

- **FAMILY FINANCE** *Neil Maton and Sannah Dad, College Chambers*
- **SPOTLIGHT ON CHILDREN AND THIRD-PARTY ACCOUNTS PLUS PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTS - HOW CAN THESE SUPPORT YOUR PRACTICE?** *Beth Rowe, OurFamilyWizard*
- **DOMESTIC ABUSE – WHY CLIENTS STRUGGLE TO LEAVE – HOW CAN WE HELP?** *Jan Hawkins*
- **PRIVATE LAW UPDATE – CASE LAW AND PRACTICAL MATTERS** *Molly Mifsud and Jonathan Rees, College Chambers*
- **TOLATA** *Hamish Dunlop, 3PB*
- **PRIVATE LAW CHILDREN UPDATE** *Sara Lewis KC, 3PB*
- **CHALLENGING TOXICOLOGY EVIDENCE IN FAMILY PROCEEDINGS** *Casey Baldwin, DNA Legal*
- **JUDICIAL INSIGHTS: COVERT RECORDINGS, FUTURE TRENDS AND DORSET DEVELOPMENTS** *HHJ Christopher Simmonds*
- Please view the full details and timings here [Family Law Conference flyer 2026.pdf](#)



Neil Maton



HHJ Christopher Simmonds

LECTURE Wednesday 24 June 2026 – 14:00 – 17:15

Topic	IHT PLANNING ON PENSIONS, IN LIFETIME ESTATE PLANNING AND ESTATE ADMINISTRATION
Lecturer	John Bunker
Venue	Marsham Court Hotel, Bournemouth
Cost	£100 – Member and Associate Members of BDLS/Trainees (Solicitors; Cilex; Apprentices) £150 – Non Member of BDLS (To include lunch and refreshments)

■ This lecture will cover:

(1) IHT on Pensions: preparing for this huge change: considering the latest legislation and guidance from HMRC and what this means for our advising clients – on wills, tax and estate planning, trusts and probate; and will include:

- Two big changes in the 2025 Budget give some hope for PRs – the 50% retention and Clearance provisions - make the PRs role more viable, but still some major concerns.
- 50% retention: when do PRs need to give notice and what PRs need to do when the 15-month period ends, and how estate administration needs a complete re-think!
- The new Clearance provisions: what they do and don't mean!
- Preparing for April 2027: the great need to use the next year, to help clients get their estate planning in order, including potential changes for wills, trusts and estates.
- Changes for Spousal by-pass trusts and the use of pensions connected with current estates.

(2) Lifetime estate planning

- Life Assurance: the enhanced role for life cover in IHT planning - tips and traps to note.
- Reviewing the effective use of IHT exemptions and the arrangement of assets.
- Lawyers' roles in liaising with financial planners – helping our clients & our business.

(3) IHT Planning in estate administration

- How can we add value to estate admin work? The scope for planning.
- RNRB: ensuring the maximum value from RNRB with modest estates.
- Loss relief for estates, but not for pensions? Planning for losses and gains.
- Potential deeds of variation to make estates & trusts more IHT effective.

John will bring his great experience of co-leading (with Emma Chamberlain) the CIOT sub-group working on the pensions changes, on which he also represented CIOT in giving evidence to the House of Lords Finance Bill Sub-Committee in October 2025.



John Bunker

JOIN Bournemouth & District Law Society (BDLS)



At BDLS we pride ourselves on being a welcoming and inclusive community for legal professionals at all stages of their careers. Our Society offers a wide range of professional, educational and social opportunities designed to support your development and help you connect with others in the local legal community. We also serve as a strong collective voice for the legal profession in our region, advocating on matters that affect our members and the wider legal landscape. For further information visit www.bournemouthlaw.com

Membership Categories:

Standard Membership for Solicitors

Associate Membership for all legal professionals who are "authorised persons" under the Legal Services Act 2007, as well as a person authorised by the SRA to have a compliance role (ie COLP, COFA).

Public Sector Membership free for legal professionals employed by public bodies (Local Authorities, HMCTS, CPS, Dorset Police, etc.) Note: Event/course fees apply at non-member rates; public sector members are not listed in the BDLS Solicitor Search.

Categories	Annual Fee
Standard Membership	£95
Associate Membership	£70
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
Associate Trainee Solicitor Member/Legal Executive	£0

Discounts are applicable for Standard and Associate member categories as follows:

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

Our annual subscription year runs from 1 January – 31 December. If your firm has staff changes during the year, please inform the BDLS Office at office@bournemouthlaw.com as soon as possible so we can update our database. For any new starters, we can adjust the fee due according to their start date.

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**

You can also email **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@rawlinsdavveeves.com
Tel: 01202 558844



Nicolalowe@hgwalker.co.uk
Tel: 01202 881454 or 07854 78
(outside office hours)



Edward Holmes
egholmes@meesons-spurlings.co.uk
Tel: 01425 484420



Fiona Pawsey
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Tel: 01202 842929



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 with your mobile number



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 and I will provide you with an email to confirm your membership with BDLS.

Please visit our website Membership Benefits to view our full list of benefits

Micromanagement: the small things that add up

Most people don't mean to micromanage. It often starts with wanting to get things right and can also reflect a manager's lack of confidence in their own abilities. But if you're on the receiving end, it can feel very different.

You might recognise it. A manager who checks everything before it goes out. Being asked to copy them into every email. Having work changed without explanation. Needing approval for decisions you would expect to make yourself.

These may not be a big deal on their own. But they can build up and start to affect how you feel and how you work.

Why it can be hard to spot

Micromanagement in the legal sector is not always obvious. It often takes the form of small, repeated actions. Because of this, people don't always recognise it straight away. Instead, they may start to question themselves. Am I doing this wrong? Should I be asking for more help? Is this just how things are done here? In a sector where standards are high, it's not always easy to tell when support starts to feel like too much control.

So why does it happen?

Legal work comes with a lot of pressure, so it's not surprising that some managers want to stay very closely involved.

There are a few common reasons for this:

- wanting to maintain high standards
- worrying about mistakes
- working to tight deadlines
- being used to a culture where mistakes are criticised
- managing teams remotely and wanting to stay involved

Another factor is that many people move into management roles without much training. Without support, it can be difficult to know how to manage others without becoming too involved.

The impact on people

Micromanagement can affect how you feel about your work, your confidence and your overall wellbeing. When you are being constantly checked, it can make you feel you are not trusted. You might start to:

- wanting to maintain high standards
- worrying about mistakes
- working to tight deadlines
- being used to a culture where mistakes are criticised
- managing teams remotely and wanting to stay involved

It can also affect the wider team. When people feel watched, rather than supported, they are less likely to speak up or share ideas.

The legal profession relies on people using their judgement and thinking clearly. These are not things people can easily do when they are being micromanaged. People tend to do their best work when they understand what is expected, feel trusted to get on with it, and know they can ask for support if they need it.

Things to think about as a manager

If you manage others, it might be worth asking yourself:

- Am I giving people space to do their work?
- Do I trust them to make decisions without checking with me?
- Do I focus on results, or do I check every step?
- Am I making changes because something is incorrect, or just because I would do it differently?
- Do I give positive feedback, or do I tend to focus on what's gone wrong?

The good news is that small changes can make a big difference. Stepping back slightly, being clear about what is needed and by when, and giving people more space can help build trust and confidence. It's also important to let people work in their own way, as long as the work is accurate and meets the standard. Make sure your feedback highlights what's going well, not just what needs to change.

Next steps

If any of this feels familiar, you can read LawCare's guide to micromanagement, which looks at what it is, why it happens, and how to avoid it. Read the full guide here: [Avoiding the micromanagement trap](#)

You can also contact LawCare for free, confidential support if pressures at work are affecting your mental health or wellbeing. Call 0800 279 6888, email support@lawcare.org.uk or use the live online chat on the LawCare website (www.lawcare.org.uk) ■

In Memorium

Roger Theodore Crispin Street

1st July 1936 - 30th January 2026



Roger joined the Winton-based legal firm of G.A. Mooring Aldridge & Brownlee in December 1953. After being admitted to the roll as solicitor in April 1959, he served as an army solicitor during his National Service. In 1961, he began work with the Southbourne firm of solicitors Richards & Morgan, where he became a partner and worked for 34 years.

Early in 1975 Roger became involved in local government matters, becoming a Councillor in Highcliffe. He took part in several conservation battles as member and as Chairman of the Christchurch Conservation Trust, notably in the retention of Highcliffe Castle. When he was Chairman of the Policy & Resources Committee Roger was involved in the retail development of Saxon Square and the acquisition of the Regent Bingo site to turn it into an arts and cultural centre to be called The Regent Centre, becoming its first Chairman.

Roger was a keen cyclist, founding the Christchurch Ramshackle Antique Bicycle Society (CRABS) in July 1975, which remains active to this day, recently celebrating 50 years as a club. As a cycle historian he researched and published five books about early bicycles and formed The Dandy Chargers in 2001.

Roger also owned and ran The Tricycle Museum in the car park by Christchurch quay for several years.

He was one of life's true eccentrics, and he is much missed by his many friends and his five children, seven grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

Tributes to Roger and donations to Dementia Research may be made at: <https://roger-street.muchloved.com> ■

BDLS CRICKET TEAM PREPARES FOR A NEW SEASON

The BDLS cricket team is once again taking part in the Bournemouth Evening League, offering members the chance to enjoy fast paced 20:20 cricket on warm (hopefully!) summer evenings. The team has a long and proud history and we hope to see it continue thriving for many seasons ahead.

The 2026 season is already underway, with BDLS LEX Cricket Team playing their opening game on 7 May at Hurn. The sun was shining and it was a perfect setting for an evening's entertainment. The most pleasing thing about the game was the debut for three new players. It was great to welcome Elliott Baczala (Lester Aldridge), Scott Rolfe (Lester Aldridge) and Joe Morris (Tretlowans). All three of them equipped themselves incredibly well and, most importantly, really enjoyed the experience.

It was also a great start to the season in cricketing terms, as BDLS Lex beat Portchester by 24 runs.

BDLS followed this with a match against Ambulance on 14 May. In a very rare occurrence, they were able to field the same 11 players that had played the first game. Bowling first, all of the bowlers did an amazing job. In particular, Iain Robinson (Clarke Rowe) recorded figures of 3-18, alongside an unbelievable 4-4 from Lewis Barr (Fretzens).



Elliott Baczala, Scott Rolfe and Joe Morris

Date	Opposition	Venue
27 May 2026	Lloyds	Bashley
17 Jun 2026	Lloyds	Bashley
25 Jun 2026	Lloyds	Hurn
09 Jul 2026	Ambulance	Hurn

The required runs were then knocked off without the loss of any wickets, with both Richard Dollimore (Trethowans) and Scott Rolfe (Lester Aldridge) carrying their bat. An incredibly destructive innings of 48 not out from Scott was a joy to watch.

This year's fixtures are now confirmed, with matches beginning at 18:30. Support from colleagues and friends is always welcome – simply come along on the day and cheer the team on. Please be aware that fixtures may occasionally be subject to change.

If you would like to learn more about the BDLS Lex cricket team or are interested in getting involved, please contact Sam Freeman at s.freeman@laceyssolicitors.co.uk. ■

Sam Freeman

s.freeman@laceyssolicitors.co.uk



Lewis Barr



Iain Robinson



Scott Rolfe and Richard Dollimore



MANAGING LENDER HANDBOOK RISK IN A CHANGING CONVEYANCING ENVIRONMENT

Residential conveyancing continues to operate within an increasingly demanding framework of lender expectations, regulatory compliance and professional indemnity scrutiny. One of the most persistent areas of exposure for firms remains the management of UK Finance Lenders' Handbook Part 2 requirements. Most practitioners are familiar with the obligation to check the handbook.

The real difficulty lies in demonstrating that the correct version was reviewed at the appropriate time and that any subsequent amendments were identified and considered before exchange of contracts.

The evidential requirement

Under the Conveyancing Quality Scheme Core Practice Management Standards, firms must operate documented procedures demonstrating how lender instructions are checked and recorded. This is not simply good practice. It is an audit requirement and a fundamental aspect of risk management.

A compliant file should show:

- the lender's specific Part 2 requirements were checked
- when the check took place
- the check was carried out prior to exchange
- a record has been retained on the matter file

In a busy conveyancing department this process is often dependent upon individual fee earners repeating manual checks. Lender requirements are amended regularly and, while the UK Finance website may indicate that a lender has updated its requirements, it does not always clearly identify what has changed. In practice, this often requires the section to be reviewed again in full, which is time consuming and leaves scope for inconsistency.

Moving towards a defensible process

As professional indemnity insurers and lender panels increasingly focus on systems and supervision, firms are looking for ways to ensure that this aspect of compliance is structured, repeatable and capable of being evidenced.

Through its role as an independent search partner, On Point Data works with firms to introduce solutions that strengthen existing workflows rather than disrupt them. One example is the Navro LC-5 Lender Check, which can be accessed as part of the wider support provided to conveyancing teams.

The LC-5 produces a date and time-stamped report that can be retained on file as confirmation of the lender's position at the point of review. The check can be repeated during the course of the transaction and the report clearly identifies any changes to the lender's instructions.

In practical terms this enables a firm to demonstrate not only that the handbook was checked, but that it was monitored as the matter progressed. That distinction is becoming increasingly significant during panel audits and CQS assessments.

The role of the search partner

Compliance does not sit in isolation from the wider conveyancing process. Firms are under pressure to maintain transaction times whilst dealing with reduced margins, recruitment challenges and rising client expectations. Many practices are therefore taking a closer look at the operational support provided by their search provider.

As an independent and service-led organisation, On Point Data focuses on helping firms build a consistent and auditable conveyancing process. With direct electronic access to Local Authority data through NLIS and a fully indemnified search portfolio, the emphasis is on delivering accurate information promptly while supporting the firm's internal compliance framework.

Because the business is independent, firms are able to access complementary tools such as LC-5 in a way that aligns with their existing case management systems and internal procedures. For many practices this removes a significant administrative burden and assists in creating a standardised approach across the department.

Risk management and commercial stability

Firms that are best placed to retain lender panel membership and negotiate favourable professional indemnity terms are those that can clearly evidence their processes. A consistent approach to lender handbook checks forms a central part of that picture.

When the process is structured and recorded, it becomes easier to:

- satisfy audit requirements
- protect the validity of the Certificate of Title
- support effective supervision and training
- maintain consistency across the team

This is no longer simply about avoiding claims. It is about demonstrating to lenders, insurers and clients that the firm operates to a defined and reliable standard.

Looking ahead

The direction of travel in residential conveyancing is towards systems that support legal judgement and make compliance visible. Technology is at its most effective when it reinforces good practice rather than attempting to replace it.

By introducing a method of recording and revisiting lender requirements as a transaction progresses, and by working with a proactive search partner to facilitate that process, firms can reduce the risk of change going unnoticed.

In an environment where scrutiny and client expectation continue to increase, that level of control is likely to become an essential component of a successful conveyancing practice.

Author profile

Leanne Lolley works with conveyancing firms across England and Wales to support risk management, compliance and operational efficiency through smarter use of property data and technology. As part of the team at On Point Data, she focuses on helping practices implement practical solutions that strengthen processes, satisfy lender and insurer expectations and improve the day-to-day experience of fee earners and their clients.

Further information

For further information about On Point Data and the services referenced in this article, please contact: ■

Leanne Lolley

Business Development Partner
On Point Data
Telephone: 0300 373 2533
Email: cs@onpointdata.co.uk
Website: www.onpointdata.co.uk

Firms' News

Senior Partner Marks 50 Years at Harold G Walker Solicitors

Harold G Walker Solicitors is celebrating an extraordinary milestone as Senior Partner, Simon Nethercott, marks 50 years with Harold G Walker. Simon started his training at the firm in February 1976 in Bournemouth, qualified in 1980 and was made Partner in 1984, specialising in Commercial Property. Simon is now Senior Partner and Head of Business and Commercial at the Firm.

Simon, who is passionate about football, was simultaneously offered a training contract at another firm in 1976. His decision to join Harold G Walker was swayed by the fact that the firm's founder, Mr Harold Walker, was then Chairman of AFC Bournemouth.

Reflecting on his early years, Simon said, "Having accepted Harold G Walker's offer, I started my training in February 1976 and am the only one left at the Firm who met Mr Harold, as he was called in the Practice. When Mr Harold finally 'hung up the quill' in the early 1990s, he proposed me as his successor as honorary Solicitor for both the Bournemouth Football Association and the Hampshire Football Association, a role I still hold today."

In his earlier days, alongside his Commercial Property work, Simon also acted as a duty solicitor attending the local magistrates' courts and police cells on behalf of Clients.



Nicola Lowe (Managing Partner) with Simon Nethercott

Simon added, "I enjoyed criminal advocacy and was sad when the Government changed the Legal Aid regime," he said. "By far the greatest satisfaction in the job has been maintaining long-term relationships with clients and other professionals. I am now acting for the grandchildren of clients I represented forty years ago. If you had told me in 1976 that this is going to be your career for the next 50 years, I would have been delighted!" ■



Trethowans Promotes Three Lawyers to Partner

Leading law firm Trethowans has recently announced the promotion of Bonnie Ward, Dan Clark and Katie Bickerstaff to Partner.

Bonnie has 15 years' experience advising across a wide range of Private Client matters, specialising in complex succession and estate planning for high-net-worth individuals, farming families and landed estate owners.

Dan has been a commercial property lawyer for close to 10 years and advises on all aspects of landlord and tenant matters, property acquisitions, disposals and estate management matters. He acts for a variety of clients including investors, corporate occupiers and SMEs.

Katie has been a qualified solicitor for over 20 years, specialising in residential property work for the last 10. Katie advises clients on both leasehold and freehold residential sales and purchases, residential re-mortgages, informal lease extensions, equity release mortgages, variations of residential leases, voluntary first registrations and unregistered land. ■



Katie Bickerstaff, Bonnie Ward and Dan Clark

TRETHOWANS
Law. As it should be.

Firms' News

Lester Aldridge Announces 2026 Associate Promotions



Lester Aldridge has announced a series of promotions across the firm, recognising the continued growth, expertise and contribution of its lawyers. The 2026 promotions round includes several Solicitors progressing to Associate, alongside a number of Associates promoted to Senior Associate, reflecting the firm's continued investment in developing talent and supporting long-term career progression.

Promoted to Associate:

- **Byron Sims**, International Private Client
- **Oliver Cattell**, Residential Property
- **Olivia Singer**, Private Client
- **Tessa Vincent**, Real Estate Development
- **Yessica Chadwick**, Litigation and Recoveries
- **Mollie Harris**, Private Client

Promoted to Senior Associate:

- **Ashley Brown**, Litigation and Recoveries
- **Erin Collins**, Litigation and Recoveries
- **Gerard Chalkly-Maber**, Corporate & Commercial



Lester Aldridge Announces Firm's New Chair



Suki Samra and Grant Esterhuizen

Lester Aldridge is delighted to announce the appointment of Grant Esterhuizen as the firm's new Chair, succeeding Suki Samra.

Grant brings nearly three decades of experience at the firm, including 16 years leading the Corporate team. As part of the leadership transition, Jamie Earley has taken over as Head of Corporate, while Grant continues in his role as Head of the wider Corporate and Commercial Group, ensuring strong continuity across the practice.

Well known across the firm for his calm and considered approach, Grant moves into the Chair role with a strong focus on supporting people, strengthening relationships and upholding the firm's guiding principles. As Chair, he will take on a key non-executive role representing the partnership, supporting effective governance and helping to promote a connected and collaborative culture across the business. He will also continue to represent the firm externally through his involvement in regional and professional networks, including Dorset Chamber and MSI Global Alliance. ■



Firms' News

Loose Legal Welcomes A New Consultant Solicitor

Loose Legal are delighted to welcome Peter West to the firm.

Peter West joins as an experienced consultant solicitor specialising in Family Law. Peter has many years' experience, advising clients of all aspects of family law and also Will and LPA drafting. Peter has a client centred approach and brings a wealth of knowledge which we are sure will enhance our growth in the area. Peter is a Resolution and Family Law society member. ■



Peter West

STEELE RAYMOND: WILLIAMS THOMPSON ACQUISITION

Steele Raymond are pleased to announce their acquisition of Williams Thompson, the long-established Christchurch, Dorset law firm.

Williams Thompson has a respected local reputation for family, residential property and private client work. Its lawyers have joined Steele Raymond's existing teams, giving clients continuity with the people who know them and their community, supported by a wider full-service firm. This includes access to specialist expertise across corporate and commercial, disputes, property, and private client services, including estate planning and tax.

Steele Raymond will continue to serve clients from Williams Thompson's Christchurch offices. ■

Steele Raymond
SOLICITORS



Private equity overtakes merger as UK law firms' preferred route to growth, new research reveals

Three-quarters of firms seeking investment now favour private equity as sector faces "once-in-a-generation" transformation according to survey of UK law firm leaders

Private equity has overtaken merger and partnership as the preferred growth strategy among UK law firms seeking investment, according to new research from leading legal technology provider Dye & Durham. According to the results: Among firms seeking investment, 75% now favour private equity, while only 52% cite the traditional route of merger or partnership. The finding is among several key insights from the extensive research that appear to signal a once-in-a-generation shift in firms' attitudes to investment, technology, and growth.

The data suggests the market shift may be more advanced than many in the profession realise. While previous research has tracked private equity deal volumes and the extent to which firms have been approached by investors, this is believed to be among the first studies to measure law firms' own investment preferences, finding a marked shift toward private equity and away from the traditional merger or partnership route.

Speaking about the release of the report today, **Colin Bohanna, Managing Director of Dye & Durham UK**, said: "This research confirms what many in the profession are increasingly alert to, and which many more have yet to realise: there is a monumental shift taking place in the UK legal market, and it will affect every part of the profession.

"While the traditional merger and partnership model is in no danger of going away, there is a remarkable transformation taking place in UK law, one that is changing how law firm leaders operate and which will have a growing influence in years to come. We hope this research will be a useful tool to the industry in navigating a way forward."

Other key findings of the research include:

- 86% of legal professionals polled in a live survey agreed that the business model of UK law firms has evolved more in the past 10 years than in the previous 20
- 88% of senior leaders agreed their technology platform signals their firm's maturity to external investors
- 80% said financial performance expectations are higher today than five years ago
- 45% cited talent recruitment and retention as the single biggest barrier to scaling

The report draws on an independent survey of 200 senior leaders at mid-sized and large UK law firms, conducted by Arlington Research, with 80% of respondents from firms with 50 or more fee earners. Dye & Durham supplemented this with a live poll at the British Legal Technology Forum and an in-depth interview with Adrian Jaggard, CEO of Taylor Rose and AIIIC Group.

Market analysis

The complete whitepaper of the research findings – *The Future of UK Law Firms 2026: Changing Leadership, Capital, and Operating Models* – also draws attention to what is likely driving these changing attitudes, specifically a "trifecta" of forces driving the shift: the growth of the consultant model (now over 4,000 practitioners)¹, the rise of alternative business structures (from 8% of SRA-regulated firms in 2017 to 13% by 2022/2023)², and an unprecedented influx of private equity (£1.2bn invested over five years, with a record £534m in 2024 alone)³, with 70% of mid-sized UK law firms approached by private equity investors in 2025.⁴ Together, the paper argues, these forces are reshaping not just how firms are financed, but how they operate and compete.

The full report can be found at: dyedurham.co.uk/resources/ebooks-reports/

About the research

The Future of UK Law Firms 2026: Changing Leadership, Capital, and Operating Models is based on:

- An independent survey of 200 senior leaders and technology decision-makers at mid-sized and large UK law firms, conducted by Arlington Research between 20 January and 4 February 2026. Respondents included equity partners, salaried partners, C-suite executives, practice managers, and consultant lawyers. 80% were from firms with 50 or more fee earners.
- A live poll of 51 attendees at the British Legal Technology Forum (BLTF) 2026, one of Europe's largest legal technology conferences.
- An in-depth interview with Adrian Jaggard, co-founder and CEO of AIIIC Group and Taylor Rose, one of the UK's largest consumer-facing law firms.

dyedurham.co.uk ■

THE FUTURE OF UK LAW FIRMS 2026

Are UK Law Firms Ready for What's Next?

The legal sector is undergoing significant change.

From evolving partnership models to new investment structures and consultant-led firms, the way law firms operate is shifting.

Our new report explores what the future holds.

Unlock the full insights at
dyedurham.co.uk/report-2026/



Explore more at
dyedurham.co.uk

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Senior Associate Solicitor – Private Client

Lymington | Scott Bailey LLP

Are you looking to join a well-established firm with a strong, long-standing, and growing client base and a team people genuinely enjoy being part of?

For someone already operating at a senior level or a strong associate ready to take the next step, this is an opportunity to join a well-regarded private client team as a key support to the Partner — leading on complex matters, sharing responsibility for more challenging work, and bringing their experience to support colleagues across the wider team.

The Role

You will manage a varied, high-quality private client caseload, including:

- **Wills, trusts and estate planning, including powers of attorney.**
- **Probate and multi-generational estate administration.**
- **Trust administration and advice to trustees and beneficiaries**
- **Tax planning, including inheritance tax mitigation.**
- **Long-term client care, capacity matters, and Court of Protection work**
- **You will lead client relationships on more complex matters.**
- **Acting as a sounding board on more complex or unfamiliar matters with colleagues.**

There is a clear structure for progression within the firm, with scope over time to take on broader responsibilities as the department continues to grow.

About you:

We are looking for someone who brings:

- **Experience across a broad range of matters, including complex and sensitive cases, with the confidence to lead work independently and provide clear, practical advice to clients (ideally 8-10 years PQE).**
- **Sound judgement and the ability to identify and manage risk appropriately.**
- **Experience supporting and mentoring junior colleagues.**
- **Commercial awareness and an interest in developing client relationships and contributing to the growth of the department.**

Location and working approach:

The role is based at our Lymington High Street office. We are a local firm and many of our clients value personal, face-to-face contact, so regular office presence and in-person collaboration remain an important part of how we work.

At the same time, we are happy to discuss hybrid working arrangements. We have a remote working policy in place, and some home working already operates within the team. We take a practical, sensible approach to finding a balance that works.

What we offer:

Scott Bailey LLP offers a competitive salary and benefits package, including 34 days' holiday (including bank holidays) plus a birthday day off, a Health Cash Plan, Group Life Cover, and pension, along with access to a staff discount platform, free parking and refreshments, and regular social events. This sits alongside award-winning training and development and a genuinely supportive and friendly working environment.

If this role appeals to you, please send your CV and a covering letter directly to Lyn Burley at Lyn.burley@scottbailey.co.uk If you would like to have an informal conversation before applying, please feel free to contact Lyn directly.

To find out more about our firm and the role, please visit our website www.scottbailey.co.uk ■



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Law Society**

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- BOURNEMOUTH LAWYER MAGAZINE £75 (£100 FOR NON-MEMBER FIRMS)



EMAIL:
office@bournemouthlaw.com



PAROLE BOARD HEARINGS

Law and Practice 4th edition

LEGAL ACTION GROUP
The access to justice charity

By Hamish Arnott, Simon Creighton and Dr Laura Janes KC (Hon)

AN INDISPENSABLE HANDBOOK FOR ALL INVOLVED IN PRISON AND PAROLE 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

The authors of "Parole Board Hearings" are Hamish Arnott, Simon Creighton and Dr Laura Janes KC who rightly state that this is the only book to comprehensively cover the decision-making powers and procedures of the Parole Board. The Legal Action Group (LAG) are to be commended for the continued publication of this new

edition. For those new to LAG, it is a national, independent charity which campaigns for equal access to justice for all members of society.

LAG's mission aims to strengthen the voice of the people and communities denied access to justice; to support frontline charities, lawyers and advisers to deliver access to justice; and to influence law and policy to improve access to justice and create a fair legal system for all.

This book remains an easy-to-use handbook which provides practical and detailed guidance on parole processes, including recall, for those serving both determinate and indeterminate sentences and we think it is helpful to both professionals and lay people interested in parole.

In the twelve years since the publication of the last edition in 2014, the legal and political landscape around parole has changed almost beyond recognition. It is vital for practitioners to have access to a textbook that brings up to date the current state of parole law and the powers and duties of the Parole Board.

The new edition includes the following detailed information depending on what you are looking for. It offers a comprehensive overview and analysis of the statutory framework, guidance and case-law affecting Parole Board hearings. Of additional assistance is an overview of how risk is assessed with practical guidance on effective representation at parole hearings and the legal aid scheme.

The authors offer a detailed analysis of the duty imposed on the Parole Board to investigate disputed allegations and it includes latest guidance on public parole hearings and the Parole Board's drive for greater transparency.

We found that the four appendices remain of great additional assistance, containing the Parole Board Rules 2019 plus relevant statutory extracts and guidance to help with an understanding of what can be a formidable and difficult area for many practitioners.

"Parole Board Hearings: law and practice" by Arnott, Creighton and Janes remains essential reading for lawyers, advisers, prisoners and their families, and all those working within prisons and for the prison and probation services and related bodies.

The final word should go to Alexandra Marks CBE, the Chair of the Parole Board for England and Wales, who writes in the Foreword: "I warmly welcome this timely and long-awaited edition as a vital tool for those navigating the complexities of prison and parole law, ensuring justice, public safety and the rehabilitation of offenders". Sums the book up nicely to us! ■

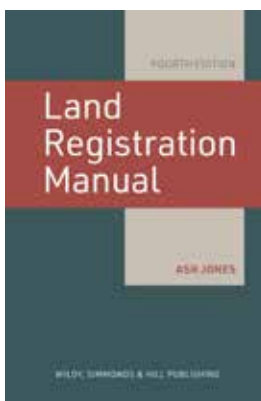
LAND REGISTRATION

MANUAL 4th edition

WILDY, SIMMONDS AND HILL PUBLISHING

By Ash Jones

AN IMPORTANT UPDATED FOURTH EDITION ON THE SYSTEM OF LAND REGISTRATION



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

Land Registrar, Ash Jones has updated his excellent manual, now in a fourth edition, to give us, as practitioners, what he describes as "an authoritative source of technical and practical advice on all matters relating to registered land and interests affecting it". And the manual just does that.

The book has an alphabetical approach (A to Z) and allows practitioners to focus on the specific topic they are researching, knowing that the book will provide useful background commentary, along with clear guidance on the form and content of relevant Land Registry applications specific to that topic.

The topics are geared to aspects of day-to-day procedure practice rather than academic areas of law – making the book more accessible and more relevant to our needs as busy practitioners.

Fully updated to take account of all the changes in land registration law and practice arising both from legislative changes. It includes those introduced by the Land Registration (Amendment) Rules 2018 Economic Crime (Transparency and Enforcement) Act 2022 and arising because of Brexit, with new cases such as *Antoine v Barclays Bank PLC* [2018] and *Brown v Ridley* [2025].

This new edition covers the usual subjects, but also many less frequently encountered topics which are often not covered elsewhere. Its remit extends not only from transfers to leases, but from bare trusts to franchises; options to powers of attorney; and chancel repair to embankments and sea walls.

Each topic contains accurate commentary to aid understanding and clear guidance on the relevant applications which may need to be made to complete a transaction or protect a client's interests.

This edition includes several new topics, including the most welcome electronic signatures, land transparency and the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 and maladministration. The book also contains all the current versions of the standard form restrictions and the prescribed lease clauses, along with a list of Land Registry forms and other useful information, making the "Land Registration Manual" an invaluable 'one-stop' source of guidance for busy practitioners at all levels of experience, enabling them to research topics and deal with matters quickly, efficiently and effectively.

Wildy, Simmonds and Hill Publishing is an independent, family-owned law publisher. Its history goes back to a time when publishers, printers and booksellers were one and the same. While the Wildy & Sons bookshop has been trading from Lincoln's Inn Archway since 1830, the shop has come across books published by the firm in the early 1820s.

Throughout the years Wildy has continued to publish law titles and work closely with experienced and valued authors, while maintaining the company's high levels of service to the legal community. In 2002 the publishing imprint became known as Wildy, Simmonds & Hill.

Today, Wildy publishes legal titles for practitioners on a wide range of subjects from wills & probate and criminal law to legal skills and property law ■.

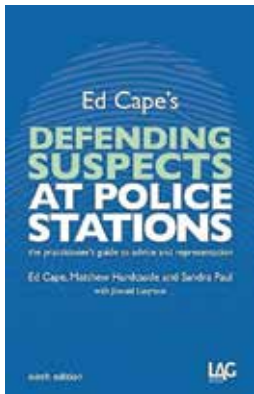
ED CAPE'S DEFENDING SUSPECTS AT POLICE STATIONS

The practitioner's guide to advice and representation 9th edition

LEGAL ACTION GROUP

By Ed Cape, Matthew Hardcastle and Sandra Paul with Jawaid Luqmani

HIGHLY TOPICAL FOR THOSE DEFENDING AT POLICE STATIONS



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

This work remains the definitive guide for those advising detainees at the police station. It's an essential purchase for solicitors, duty solicitors, custody officers, criminal law students and for those preparing for police station accreditation. And it is written for, and dedicated to, all those lawyers, trainee lawyers, students, and others who are committed to fairness and justice in our criminal process.

The authors are Ed Cape, Matthew Hardcastle and Sandra Paul with Jawaid Luqmani. They offer us authoritative guidance which remains unrivalled. Comprehensive yet highly accessible and practical, "Defending Suspects", first published in 1993, provides us with the answers to every day practical questions and problems. We think that the Legal Action Group (LAG) are to be commended for the continued publication of this new edition. For those new to LAG, it is a national, independent charity which campaigns for equal access to justice for all members of society.

LAG's mission aims to strengthen the voice of the people and communities denied access to justice; to support frontline charities, lawyers and advisers to deliver access to justice; and to influence law and policy to improve access to justice and create a fair legal system for all. And they do just that.

The first few chapters of the book explain the basic principles of defending clients at the investigative stage and examine the key provisions of PACE and the Codes of Practice which are now over 40 years old. As the authors state: "much has changed during that time", and we are lucky enough to have this book as a result!

Subsequent chapters tackle the various stages of advising a client including taking instructions, advising on 'silence', interview strategies, samples and searches, identification procedures and the charge decision. The book also includes dedicated chapters on advising and assisting vulnerable clients, on enforcement of the PACE and Code provisions, and on advising immigration detainees.

This ninth edition has been fully updated to include all key developments since the last edition in 2020, plus the latest codes, regulations and guidance issued by the Home Office, the College of Policing and the CPS and the latest case-law.

"Defending Suspects at Police Stations" is supported by bi-annual police station updates in the excellent "Legal Action" magazine. Cape and Hardcastle and Paul of Kingsley Napley bring years of experience between them. And Jawaid Luqmani of Luqmani, Thompson and Partners provide his expertise in immigration law for the chapter on immigration detainees.

The election of a new government two years ago, in 2024, has "had less of an impact on the investigative stage of the criminal process than some might have thought" write the authors. They go on to say that "the government has committed to increasing the number of police officers which will have an impact on the number of arrests and place greater strain on the criminal defence profession". And at the time of writing, we await Sir David Gauke's review on sentencing, so it is most important to keep up to date with changes as they take place. ■

ADOPTION LAW: A PRACTICAL GUIDE

WILDY, SIMMONDS AND 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

For 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.

The second edition of this hardback book from Wildy was published in 2025. ■



Read the full report here



“Nearly 18 weeks a year is currently lost to non-billable work. This is not a marginal issue; it is a systemic one. But it is also solvable. The firms that act decisively to address it will help define the future of legal practice in the UK.”

UK law firms are at a critical inflection point. While nearly seven in ten firms report increased profitability over the past year, the reality beneath that headline tells a different story. Significant inefficiencies remain embedded within daily operations, limiting how far firms can truly grow.

Recent research from LEAP’s Profitability in Law: Global Report 2026, based on insights from 700 legal professionals across six markets, highlights a clear disconnect between potential and performance. An overwhelming 93% of firms believe they could be more profitable, yet many continue to operate with fragmented systems, manual processes and limited adoption of modern technology.

One statistic stands out above all: UK legal professionals are spending close to three hours a day on non-billable tasks. Over the course of a year, that equates to 88 working days, or nearly 18 weeks, lost to work that does not directly contribute to revenue.

This is not just an operational inefficiency. It is a structural challenge impacting profitability, talent retention and long-term competitiveness.

The cost of inefficiency

Across the sector, administrative burden remains one of the most persistent barriers to growth. Nearly half of firms cite excessive manual work as a key issue, while over a third struggle with managing multiple disconnected systems.

These inefficiencies create duplication, increase risk and prevent lawyers from focusing on high-value, client-facing work. At the same time, firms are navigating rising pricing pressure, making it even harder to maintain margins while delivering quality service.

The result is a profession being squeezed from both sides: external pressure to deliver more value, and internal limitations that restrict efficiency.

A growing pressure on people

The operational strain is also having a clear impact on people. Burnout is now reported as a widespread issue, with the majority of firms identifying it as a concern, alongside high levels of staff turnover. When highly trained legal professionals are spending hours on repetitive administrative tasks, the consequences extend beyond lost productivity. It affects engagement, retention and the overall sustainability of the firm. Without change, this pressure risks undermining both performance and culture.

Technology as the turning point

Encouragingly, the path forward is already visible. Firms that are investing in integrated technology and AI are beginning to close the productivity gap. A significant majority of legal professionals report that AI is already delivering measurable time savings, particularly in areas such as document review, drafting and workflow automation.

The UK market is emerging as a leader in this transition. Firms are demonstrating strong adoption of AI and workflow technologies, particularly in areas that directly impact efficiency and client delivery.

This shift is not about replacing legal expertise. It is about enabling it, freeing lawyers from administrative burden so they can focus on higher-value work.

From awareness to action

Despite widespread recognition of the problem, execution remains inconsistent. While automation and better technology are widely acknowledged as priorities, far fewer firms have taken meaningful steps to reduce administrative load or consolidate their systems. Closing this gap requires a more deliberate approach.

Firms that successfully improve profitability are those that focus on eliminating non-billable work, integrating their technology stack and equipping teams with tools that support efficiency at scale. Responsible adoption of AI, with appropriate verification and oversight, is also becoming a key differentiator.

Defining the future of legal practice

The legal sector has always evolved, but the pace of change is accelerating. Firms that modernise their operations now are positioning themselves for stronger profitability, improved client service and better staff retention.

Those that delay risk falling behind in an increasingly competitive market.



When Your Legal Software Finally Moves As Fast As You Do

How Leiper Gupta Family Lawyers rebuilt its operations to grow faster, bill smarter, and keep client care at the centre of everything

Leiper Gupta Family Lawyers (LGFL) was never meant to be a conventional firm. When Rita Gupta and her co-founder Anne Leiper set it up in 2008, they wanted autonomy and faster decision-making, away from partner committees where nothing ever seemed to get decided. That meant building the firm around technology from the start.

Nearly 18 years later, LGFL has grown into a leading family law boutique with 11 staff and a fully paperless operation. Rita now shares what she's learned with others, speaking at legal technology conferences and having recently completed the Goldman Sachs Mini MBA.

18 years of growth also meant 18 years of evolving demands. Their original case management software had been a reasonable fit at the start. But it had been built primarily as an accounting tool with case management added on top, and as LGFL grew, the gaps became harder to work around.

"I never do anything less than a hundred and twenty miles an hour, so for me it was really frustrating."

Their software wasn't cloud-based, so billing often had to wait. Getting invoices out remotely meant carrying a laptop and hunting for a reliable connection. Rita remembers one holiday in Devon where it took hours just to get the monthly bills through, the system crashing repeatedly.

Seeing the ceiling before you hit it

Rita could see where the firm was headed: more practice areas, more clients, more complexity. Technology had always been central to LGFL, and she knew that as the firm evolved, the systems had to evolve with it.

"Any law firm wanting to survive has to embrace technology positively. It's not something we can ignore."

She started evaluating options and brought her team into the process. They attended trade shows and worked through demos methodically. Two vendors made the final cut, and one feature separated them: Clio's client portal.

LGFL regularly shares large volumes of sensitive documents with clients, and doing it securely had always required more steps than it should have. "When you're paperless, it has to be done securely," Rita says. Clio's client portal gave them a straightforward way to do exactly that. Now clients have one place to access everything, and documents get where they need to go without the hassle.

Choosing the right centre of gravity

Rita had been clear about what she needed: a cloud-based system with centralised data. With Clio, the daily shuffle between tools stopped.

"We love the fact that it's all together. We don't have disparate systems. And I think that's really important when you're a lean, agile firm like ours."

Rita has since brought a solutions architect on board to deepen how the firm uses Clio, and they're constantly exploring what else the platform can do.

The rhythm of a well-run firm

Billing was the first thing to improve. In their previous system, getting monthly invoices out across 90-100 matters was a two-to-three-day process, with real operational risk if the person running it was away. Now, the same cycle takes hours, and multiple team members are trained to run it.

"We can usually get all our month's bills out within hours now, whereas prior to that it would take two to three days in the old system."

Client onboarding followed a similar pattern. The process had been dependent on individual knowledge and was hard to hand off. Rita standardised it, saving roughly 15-20 minutes per client and creating a much smoother experience for new team members learning the ropes.

The client portal has become one of the firm's most valued tools. LGFL walks each new client through it in a brief onboarding session, and uptake has been better than expected. "We've got people who say they're really not very tech savvy using it and loving it," Rita says. "And it saves my inbox."

Away from the office, Rita relies on Clio's mobile app. "I was in the back of the taxi, checking a document and then time recording," she says. The work travels with her, and nothing gets left behind.

Freeing the lawyer to be a lawyer

LGFL is also putting Clio's AI capabilities to work, giving lawyers more capacity for the complex work only they can do. The team runs a dedicated channel where they share prompts, compare results, and build on each other's findings.

It reflects how the firm has always approached technology: thoughtfully, and as a team. Rita is clear about why that matters from the start.

"Technology helps us be better lawyers. My whole ethos is that it frees us up to get away from the administrative aspects of being a lawyer."

That matters for a boutique firm competing for talent. When the systems are doing their job, the firm can take on more complex work, maintain a higher standard of client care, and grow without simply adding headcount to absorb the load.

18 years in, LGFL still moves at the speed it was built for. The firm Rita set out to build has never been more capable of taking on whatever comes next. ■

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