

AUTUMN ISSUE
2023

LEICESTERSHIRE LAW SOCIETY MAGAZINE



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ACCESS TO JUSTICE

A NEW STUDENT
BURSARY

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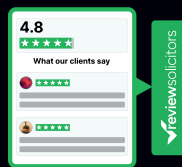
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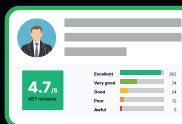
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Letter From The Editor Matthew Olnier



Welcome to this edition of the Leicestershire Law Society (LLS) magazine. We have the pleasure of introducing our new President, Bhumika Parmar, director of BP Legal.

Bhumika is a respected solicitor with a wealth of experience in the legal field, and we are confident that under her leadership, the society will continue to thrive and serve our community. We're excited to see the direction she will take the society in and the positive impact she will undoubtedly make – as well as the calendar of events she has lined up for us!

As we welcome Bhumika, we also say farewell to our outgoing President, Gina Samuel-Richards. Gina has had an amazing year. She has done so much to push LLS forward. We are indebted to her for working so tirelessly to promote the Society and to inspire the next generation (as well as this one.) Her dedication and commitment to the legal community have been truly commendable. We wish her all the best in her future endeavours.

This issue features a range of insightful articles that cover various aspects of the law.

Our contributors have delved into ideas around financial planning, attracting young people to the legal sector, and more. We also have a thoughtful piece on the evolution of marriage from 2 New Street Chambers and an analysis of maternity care from Nelsons.

We hope you find this issue informative and engaging. Thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to serving you in the future. And if you have any ideas for articles you know where we are.

All the very best.

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Introducing Our 2024 President

At 164 years old, Leicestershire Law Society welcomes its eleventh female President who also stands as the society's third Asian female in the role. Bhumika Parmar, director of BP Legal, announces her strategy for LLS through 2023-2024



It's with great pride that I take on this esteemed role, following past President Glynis Wright's call to me a few years ago recommending me as a Leicestershire Law

Society (LLS) Treasurer and eventually President. My immediate past President Gina Samuel-Richards enjoyed a very successful year for LLS, with a

memorable calendar of popular and well attended events, training courses and raising awareness for her charities.

I want to express my sincere gratitude to the executive board as well as all members of the Leicestershire Law Society and the Committee for bestowing upon me this incredible opportunity to serve as your President. I am humbled by your confidence and assure you that I will dedicate myself wholeheartedly to the welfare and progress of our esteemed profession.

THE FUTURE

In the coming year, we will face a dynamic and ever-evolving legal landscape. Changes in legislation, societal expectations, and advancements in technology will challenge us to adapt and innovate. However, these also present us with an opportunity to demonstrate the resilience and adaptability of the legal profession. Together, we can strive to stay at the forefront of these developments, ensuring that our

STRATEGY OVERVIEW

- 1 Increase membership and inclusion of Leicestershire solicitors and encourage them to be more involved with LLS. I intend to hold some events in Loughborough in my presidency and work closely with the membership sub-board to encourage more members and allow them to see the great benefits we have as a society.
- 2 Encourage practices to open their doors to young law graduates and assist them with paving their way into their law career, guide them and retain them as the future generation of law. In my own firm, we encourage applicants to apply for work experience to develop their knowledge and skills. Our firm continues its role with De Montfort University as mentors to the younger generation. I will also be continuing the fantastic work of Gina and Matthew Olnier in reaching out to colleges and schools to encourage the next generation to consider careers in law.
- 3 Continue with the governance of the society. It's important to ensure there is documentation in place for any incoming president. I intend to work closely with the executive committee developing this and reviewing the way the society delivers.

members are well-equipped to serve their clients and the community effectively. Moreover, the public's trust in the legal system is essential for a thriving society. To earn and maintain that trust, we must address issues such as access to justice, diversity and inclusion within the legal profession, and ensure that the benefits of legal representation are accessible to all.

EXTENDING THE LEGACY

LLS has a rich history of upholding the rule of law, promoting access to justice, and advancing the highest ethical standards within our legal community. My goal as

CHARITIES OF THE YEAR

This year, I have chosen to promote the work of three charities: Menphys, helping young disabled people; The Zinthyia Trust, supporting venerable women; and Help the Homeless, taking care of homeless and vulnerable people. I wish to raise the awareness of all the wonderful work these charities carry out selflessly, creating a difference in people's lives.

President is to build on this legacy and continue to steer our society towards excellence.

During my term, I will foster a sense of unity and collaboration in our legal community. Our strength lies in our unity and willingness to collaborate. Through collaboration,

we can strengthen the collective voice of LLS, making it a driving force for positive change.

I intend to continue the great work and legacy set by my predecessors, to support the future generation of lawyers. My focus is to connect us with the youth of the county. It is recognised that Leicester has a significantly larger population of young people compared to the national average (Leicester City Council 2021). I wish to develop methods to connect with and tap into this talent.

LLS is recognised as one of the most vibrant law societies in England and Wales and I will continue promoting its aims bringing in more members and delivering on growth. I want to encourage each member of our society to actively participate, share their insights, and contribute to the betterment of our profession. Your ideas, experiences, and dedication are the lifeblood of the Leicestershire Law Society.

I envisage building on the legacy of LLS, therefore I will continue hosting joint events with the Leicestershire Junior Lawyers Division. My other plans include the usual Civic Dinner, LLS Awards, and the Garden Party.

In conclusion, I stand committed to lead our society with integrity, transparency, and inclusivity and will continue to celebrate diversity in the profession.

LLS EVENTS

2023 / 2024

23RD NOVEMBER 23

DIWALI CELEBRATIONS

16TH DECEMBER 23

CHRISTMAS JNR BAKE OFF

24TH JANUARY 24

COOKING WITH KWOKLYN

19TH FEBRUARY 24

MATRIX EVENT

4TH MARCH 24

CHARITY FASHION SHOW

14TH MARCH 24

CIVIC DINNER

4TH APRIL 24

AWARDS SHORTLISTING

17TH MAY 24

LLS ANNUAL AWARDS

13TH JUNE 24

SUMMER GARDEN PARTY

5TH JULY 24

CHARITY FUNDRAISER

30TH AUGUST 24

PROFESSIONAL NETWORK

12TH SEPTEMBER 24

ACCOUNTANCY SEMINAR

TBC 24

CAREER IN LAW

27TH SEPTEMBER 24

POOL TOURNAMENT

PLEASE NOTE THESE DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT
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The Concept of Marriage in the modern day



Relationships have evolved, but has the law to protect cohabiting couples? Specialist family and civil law set 2 New Street Chambers discusses the rights of those in cohabiting relationships

Over the last century, there have been many significant and ground-breaking changes in family law, extending the rights of those who are married and in cohabiting partnerships.

Yet it's difficult to deny that today, the law still fails to provide adequate legal regime for couples who are not married but who live together in a relationship which is factually like that of a married couple.

It is striking that the social reality of modern relationships is still not recognised to provide the same protection when things go wrong. Despite a vigorous campaign to change the law, in November 2022, the Government rejected the recommendations for cohabitee law reforms stating it had no plans to reform the laws regarding financial remedy and succession. This struggle for change is getting as long as the struggles for reform of divorce laws in the last century.

The concept of marriage in Victorian times was rooted and founded upon a religious ceremony of marriage – ceremony continues to provide the route to the protections afforded by the Matrimonial Causes Act 1973 where the court can look at what

is fair having regard to needs and contributions.

Choosing to avoid ceremony, many cohabiting couples on the other hand, deeply shrink away from creating the legal documents connected with property rights leading to a situation of ignorance. If they could have open and honest conversations at the time, for example, if they wish to buy a property together or have children, there is a constellation of protections which can be put in place (eg Wills, cohabitation

It is striking that the social reality of modern relationships is still not recognised to provide the same protection when things go wrong

agreements, advice on the different types of property ownership, deeds of trust, charges or licenses).

Over the years, there have been many articles on the same subject, so we are not saying anything new. However, there are cases reported regularly on the 'regime' of property and trust law where couples have got themselves into a complete mess when the relationship has broken down.

The case of Hudson and Hathaway being a prime example (Hudson and Hathaway 2022 (EWCA) Civ 1648). The property in dispute was romantically called 'Picnic House' and the case concerned the issue of the requirement for detrimental reliance in common intention constructive trust cases and where one is seeking to assert or deny an enlarged beneficial interest in property in TOLATA cases. The litigation was long and arduous. One party was able to rely upon email exchanges to evidence an agreement in proper form and the court conclude

that detrimental reliance was a requirement for the court to uphold a common intention constructive trust.

It is vital in these cases that detailed notes are taken from the client from the start to extract the relevant facts, and understandings between cohabiting couples and to ask the necessary questions. An analysis of the legal issues is also required at the earliest opportunity. ■



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Updating your financial plans



A change is often as good as a fresh start – Andrew Goulter, Wealth Management Consultant at Mattioli Woods explains time limits, thresholds and allowances of financial planning

The return to school has taken place, new fresh faced students have been dropped off at university and this represents an opportunity to reflect on where we are personally.

As a financial professional, I often find my own financial planning takes a back seat to taking care of my clients. There are two junior ISAs that were supposed to have been set up six months ago for my children that I have still not got round to sorting.

It is easy to get buried in the complexity of client work, timelines and demands and put ourselves last. However, there are time limits, thresholds, and allowances that if unused go to waste so there is no time like the present to get started.

Life assurance and Wills

In a financial review with a legal professional last year, I discovered that the individual had neither a Will nor Lasting Power of Attorney even though that department existed within their firm.

They clarified that they were uncomfortable to disclose personal details to a colleague which is quite understandable but I also had to point out the risks of dying intestate. In the end a connection was made to another firm to get this arranged and I would encourage all to get a Will in place. Perhaps even attending a Leicestershire Law Society event to meet a suitable contact who might fit the bill.

As a nation, we are chronically underinsured with only 37% of UK households having a valid policy in 2021/22 (Direct Line Group, 2022).

As not everyone is an employee of a company but perhaps a partner, they might not benefit from life assurance policies that are provided via employment, such as group life schemes.

Protection is not a glamorous part of planning as we would all like to think we are invincible. Yet taking the time to ensure there is enough provision to take care of your family and yourself in case of

critical illness, through to an age where they can stand on their own two feet, is invaluable. It would be rare that life assurance is cheaper tomorrow than it is today, so it is always better to get this resolved sooner rather than later.

Pensions

As a general workforce, we are highly mobile these days, with the ability to work remotely and to switch roles, be promoted or take breaks in employment.

This means we often build up pension funds but do not necessarily have a handle on where they are or how they are invested. For those who are not employed but become partners, there is often a cessation of auto enrolment contributions, meaning pensions are being left behind.

As a broad growth calculation, if an individual was to put £10,000, gross, into a pension for 20 years and receive a 5% growth rate, they would have a sum of £344,932 on a simple growth basis. A 5% return would represent to a slightly

higher than middle of the road risk strategy and not necessarily be suitable for all. If the time horizon is only 10 years, then the final value is £130,680.

This demonstrates that it is often time in the market rather than timing the market that makes the difference. However, as with all investments there is no guarantee and any monies invested can fall as well as rise.

Have a clear plan in place

The primary issue for a lot of financial planning is understanding the end goal.

In a review with another professional, I understood they were very keen to make pension contributions to be tax efficient with their savings. However, they wished to retire by the age of 47. In the discussion, I highlighted that a pension would only be accessible by the age of 57 and therefore, an intervening plan would need to be put in place for the ten-year gap.

When it comes to undertaking complex planning, often the approach in the legal sector is to consult an expert so why not with your finances. As financial planners, we are experts at looking into the long term, highlighting where things are working and where they are not to optimise these elements for you.

Most financial advisers, including Mattioli Woods, do not charge for initial consultations, so do not be afraid to reach out and speak to somebody to gain some clarity and run through any queries you may have. If you are losing a minute of sleep for a financial question which could be asked and answered by an expert at no cost, then why not?

Tax can be taxing

For some, perhaps progressing to more senior roles in the legal professional field, elements like mortgages are less of an issue and children have moved on to accumulate their own wealth.

At this point the amount of tax being paid becomes quite significant, especially if everything is charged under income.

Pensions can help alongside using tax-reducing investments such as venture capital trusts (VCTs) and enterprise investment scheme (EIS) structures. These are specialist investments and not suitable for everyone, but worthy

of consideration. As a colleague once told me: "A client cannot thank you for what they don't know," and to that end, exploring all options is essential to ensure you are confident going forward.

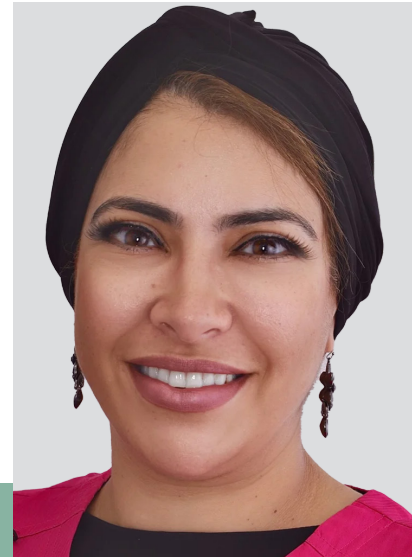
Getting it done

As someone who has recently updated their Wills and knows they have work to do in their own financial affairs, I also know the peace of mind that comes from ensuring these elements are sorted.

Do yourself a favour and reach out, as a change is as good as a fresh start. More than anything else, good luck.



Coming up smiling: from adversity to aesthetics



The unique and emotional story of an entrepreneur and her drive to remove fear and inject fun into dentistry

"I grew up in a war zone surrounded by conflict and fear," Dr Nora Albaldawi, a cosmetic dentist and advanced facial aesthetician based in Leicester shared with us, revealing her inspiring journey from childhood in a war-torn country to becoming a thriving medical professional with her own practice, Beautiful Smiles.

"My mum was a dentist in Iraq and I saw first-hand how many patients couldn't afford reconstruction and so they opted for teeth-pulling. I, like many people, disliked the clinical and fearful environment that dental practices had, not only in Iraq but the world over. I knew I wanted to be a dentist from a young age, but I wanted to remove that fear."

Dr Nora worked hard to gain qualifications in dentistry but when she moved to England in 2004, she was required to re-sit her dentistry qualifications for UK accreditation. She went on to complete a Masters in Orthodontics at the University of Warwick where she achieved a Member of Joint Dental faculties from the Royal College of Surgeons and the faculty of general dental practitioners. Seeking to develop a niche in the industry, she undertook

hypnotherapy courses and the very latest training in dental technologies.

In the makings of the distinctive dental practice she now runs, Dr Nora worked in NHS dental practices and then privately in Burbage for 13 years. An online niche was established after recording a series of videos that took social media by storm, developing a social media following that attracted UK influencers.

"I'd film dances with my clients during and after their teeth whitening for example, where we all joined in. They basically went viral, and I started bringing in high volumes of clients to the practice I was working at who would travel from all over the UK having seen my TikTok and Instagram posts."

There came a point where Dr Nora decided that she wanted to create a luxurious practise with the fun factor and approachability for clients travelling from all over the UK. From this desire she established a brand-new practice of her own here in the leafy Victoria Park area of Leicester.

Striving to achieve the perfect beautiful smile in her clients, Dr Nora wanted set up Beautiful Smiles

so she could offer more than only dental care, and so facial aesthetics and body treatment training ensued.

"I am a perfectionist," she told us, adding: "I wanted to be able to provide the treatment using the very best technology to ensure my clients left my practice with not only the perfect smile but feeling their best in their appearance.

"The feedback we get from our clients has been really moving. They post ecstatic selfies on social media and spread the word about our services and how we are different. They can feel that we are the best here at what we do, and I believe they can feel that our team are happy and passionate about what they do too."

The practice itself is inviting, the décor modern and fun, with not a hint of clinical scent, with spa-like treatment rooms that ensure relaxation and warmth is paramount.

Growing up surrounded by danger and being witness to dental treatments stripped back to the bare necessities, Dr Nora has gone on to create a new kind of dental practice.



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Freeths launches student bursary scheme in honour of Mukesh Patel

FREETHS



The national law firm has established a bursary programme for law students at the University of Leicester and De Montfort University in memory of the firm's former managing partner

A new bursary will provide local undergraduate law students with an award of £4,000 a year for three years with a focus on the socio-economic backgrounds of students who want to pursue a career in law.

Freeths launched the scheme to honour the legacy of Mukesh Patel, former Managing Partner of Freeths' Leicester Office, and his commitment to diversity and equality within the legal profession and to the local business community.

Lisa Gilligan, Managing Partner of Freeths Leicester, said: "Mukesh was always ready to help, encourage and support students particularly those from less privileged backgrounds. We hope that this bursary will not only ensure that we continue to honour his vision and passion but also help to support a pipeline of local law graduates to progress their careers in our region.

"Graduate retention in Leicester is a well-documented challenge and the bursary will help Freeths to play its part in addressing this head on."

A respected and popular member of both Freeths and the local legal community, Mukesh, who was born and went to school in Leicester, led

the firm's dispute resolution team in Leicester and subsequently became Managing Partner of the city's Freeths office in 2014. He died on Saturday, February 18, 2023 aged 54, leaving behind his wife Rita and their two sons.

Rita Patel said: "From humble beginnings himself, Mukesh was a firm believer that anyone with passion and drive should be afforded every opportunity."

In addition to the financial award, Freeths will also provide the students with a mentor throughout their degree course, a paid summer placement and an interview for the firm's graduate apprenticeship scheme (subject to qualifying criteria) based in the Leicester office.

Sarah Thomson, Director of Engagement at De Montfort University, said: "Scholarships and bursaries are becoming more essential for more students in the current economic climate to allow them to participate fully in university life. It is fantastic that Freeths are supporting talented students in this way and encouraging them to stay in Leicester to work once they graduate.

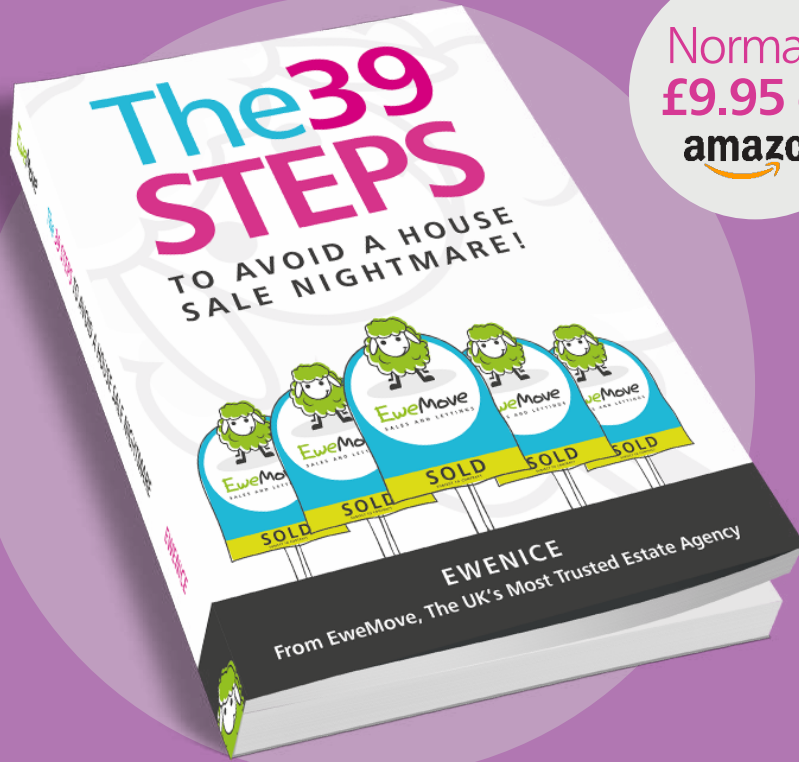
"We would like to express our gratitude to them and to Mukesh's

family for this award. Mukesh was well known and loved by many at DMU so we are delighted that he will be remembered through this fund which will support students to reach their potential whilst studying at university."

Steve Corbett, Director of Development and Alumni Relations at The University of Leicester, added: "The Freeths Skylark Scholarship is part of the University of Leicester's broader Skylark Scholarship programme, which has been established entirely thanks to the support of philanthropic donors. We look forward to seeing our inaugural Skylark scholars progress and hope to see this transformational scholarship programme grow."

"It's a generous package of benefits aimed at supporting law students who are facing financial challenges throughout their time at university and beyond. From monetary support to mentoring and placement opportunities, the scholarship has been developed to offer recipients a solid first few steps on their way to a successful career in law. A huge thanks to Freeths for choosing to support Leicester students in honour of Mukesh Patel."

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Membership Update

With Zainab Zaeem,
Chair of the Membership Sub-Board



The Surrey Law Society's Legal Awards held at G Live in Guildford was attended by Zainab who represented Leicestershire Law Society on October 12.

The evening promised to be even bigger and better and guests were not disappointed. Attendees enjoyed a drinks reception, an exceptional three-course dinner, and fabulous entertainment including live jazz music and comedy with special guest speaker Shaparak Khorsandi.

Zainab was grouped with Kent Law Society's President Louise

Duckett, and Managing Partner of AmicusLaw Claire Lovett, giving Zainab a night to remember.

On the night, the legal awards recognised outstanding legal professionals in categories such as Law Firm of the Year, Lifetime Achievement Award, Junior Lawyer of the Year and Lawyer of the Year.

Leicestershire Law Society congratulates all finalists and winners and wishes each individual and firm a long and successful career.





Why be a member with LLS

A membership with the Leicestershire Law Society brings many benefits with access to courses, networking events and opportunities to become involved with representing the local legal profession.

Some of the benefits are:

- Opportunities to attend networking events
- Meeting others from the local legal and business community
- Free subscription to electronic newsletters
- Opportunity to join and participate in sub-boards
- Consult with The Law Society and represent on local matters
- Receive discounted rates on CPD seminars/courses
- Receive discounts from local retailers and restaurants

Types of membership

There are various ways of becoming an LLS member. All members are entitled to attend our courses, social and networking events and can take advantage of our membership benefits.

- **CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP**

This is for firms of solicitors. You only pay for Partners in the firm. Corporate membership covers all solicitors, trainees, and paralegals, so it is a great way of enabling the whole firm to make use of the membership.

- **ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP**

This is for barrister's chambers and covers all barristers at the chambers.

- **INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP**

Individuals can become members of the LLS. This is available for all current and former legal professionals.

- **GROUP MEMBERSHIP**

This is for businesses that are not law firms but employ lawyers.

For more information on how to become a member, visit our membership page at leicestershirelawsociety.org.uk/become-a-member

Maternity Care and access to Justice



NELSONS
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Leicester maternity units received a safety rating of 'inadequate' this year. Solicitor and Partner at Nelsons Matthew Olnier reviews the state of NHS maternity care

As the head of a team of specialist clinical negligence solicitors at Nelsons, I've watched the unfolding stories of poor maternity care in our region (and beyond) with sadness. Most recently, Care Quality Commission (CQC) found care at Leicester maternity units to have worsened, giving a safety rating of inadequate.

Deputy Director of Secondary and Specialist Healthcare at the CQC, Carolyn Jenkinson, said: "When we inspected maternity services at University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust, we observed a deterioration in the level of care being provided to women, people using the service and their babies. Both services were regularly understaffed, which placed people and their babies at risk. It also meant staff weren't always able to take their breaks, which affected their wellbeing, morale, and ability to do their job."

The inspectors also found that some people had experienced delays in their care of up to six hours as doctors were not

available. This resulted in people discharging themselves. The CQC's report also highlighted issues with cleanliness and the age of some equipment used on the units.

University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust said: "Improving maternity services is a key priority and many of the highlighted challenges had already been identified before the inspection with plans in place to tackle them. However, we take the report and its findings incredibly seriously and are using them to drive further improvements for women and birthing people. While we know there is more to do, we are committed to providing safe, high-quality and compassionate care..."

As a specialist, I know all too well the tragedy and heartbreak that can result from incidents of poor maternity care. It's so important that people are able to access specialist lawyers when something terrible happens. They need specialists on their side fighting their corner.

As has been repeatedly shown in recent times, it is not possible, for a variety of reasons, to rely on the findings of the maternity unit or indeed the Trust. These types of cases are some of the most complex and technically demanding of all clinical negligence claims. Sometimes families have tragically lost a baby and there will be an inquest. Again, it is important for the family to consider obtaining specialist legal representation for the inquest. Invariably, the Trust will be legally represented.

We know that other maternity units in the region – and indeed the country – are also facing investigation. The Senior Midwife Donna Ockenden is heading the largest ever maternity enquiry of its kind at Nottingham Hospitals.

Earlier this year, the Healthcare Safety Investigation Branch (HSIB) published the summary of their findings from their maternity investigation programme across the country. The programme of investigations into maternity and newborn safety incidents began

in 2018 as part of a national initiative to improve safety in maternity care.

All NHS Trusts are required to tell the Maternity and Newborn Safety Investigation (MNSI) about certain patient safety incidents that happen in maternity care so that an investigation can be carried out and, where relevant, safety recommendations can be made to improve services.

The purpose of the programme is to:

1. Provide independent, standardised, and family-focused investigations of maternity cases for families
2. Provide learning to the health system through reports at local, regional, and national levels
3. Analyse data to identify key trends and provide system-wide learning
4. Be a system expert in standards for maternity investigations
5. Collaborate with system partners to escalate safety concerns.

Emerging themes

The HSIB's findings over 2022/23 identified the following themes from safety recommendations made to trusts during the year:

1. Clinical assessment
2. Guidance
3. Fetal monitoring
4. Clinical oversight
5. Risk assessment
6. Escalation
7. Communication
8. Investigations
9. Clinical observations
10. Induction of labour
11. Information
12. Triage

As a result, the HSIB has been working to discover the interaction between these themes and their interdependence in their actions and effects. This is all part of understanding that if one area is deficient, it will affect others and that looking into this in more detail will help in designing systemic improvements which will ultimately improve patient safety.

These findings and themes echo and confirm what we as specialist claimant clinical negligence solicitors see. It's important I think that we and our clients are able to engage with and inform the process of learning and improvement. That process must be open and honest.

It's true that the NHS is facing many pressures. It's also true that every mother and baby in this country deserves a decent, safe and reasonable level of maternity care. And when something goes wrong, they deserve access to Justice in the form of specialist legal representation.

2022/23 findings

Some of the key highlights found in the report were:

- The number of investigation referrals relating to brain injury indicates a sustained decrease in babies with abnormal MRI results or neurological damage
- In the last year, the programme made more than 1,380 safety recommendations to trusts and healthcare providers
- Their reports have identified racial differences in maternity outcomes
- The programme has helped to increase the involvement of perinatal teams in patient safety
- The programme has deepened the understanding of the role of emerging themes and how they help to identify issues in the healthcare system as a whole that contribute to the harm experienced by pregnant women/people and their families.

The evolution of employment law

ksabLAW



Solicitor and owner of ksabLAW, Keeley Baigent, discusses the changes she's seen in employment law over the last 20 years

The area of employment law has changed hugely since I qualified in January 2002. Over the years, the area has grown resulting in the need for specialist employment law teams.

Of all the disciplines, employment law is the one in which there has been most developments further to new domestic and European legislation. Brexit is further likely to result in a potential overhaul of a number of areas including working time.

At the start of my career, the main claim made by employees was unfair dismissal as at that time, the qualifying period of service to bring such a claim was one year. It was a steep learning curve during the first six years of practice gaining invaluable experience, working long hours including giving seminars, conducting corporate support work, drafting numerous staff handbooks, contracts of employment and Compromise Agreements (as they were referred to at that time), dealing with much litigation and

gaining promotion to Associate and then partner.

Then, 2008 brought with it an intense working period driven by the recession which resulted in handling large-scale redundancies, closure of sites and settlement agreements. Given the increased job losses that the recession created, it's unsurprising that a large number of employment claims resulted from this time.

Over the years, discrimination claims have changed and become much more prevalent. At the beginning of my career, the trend was very much in the more traditional areas, namely

sex, pregnancy, and maternity discrimination. I also recall having a number of equal pay claims particularly when there were a raft of claims coming through the tribunals relating to local authority female care workers comparing

themselves to higher paid dustbin men who, they said, were conducting work of 'similar value' to them.

In 2010, the Equality Act became law which brought together over 100 different pieces of legislation as well as strengthened rights in the area of discrimination and equal opportunities, again resulting in more claims.

The law changed in 2012 requiring employees to have two years' service or more to bring an unfair dismissal claim. Whilst the initial fear amongst employment law practitioners was that this would lead to a reduction in workloads,

Over the years, discrimination claims have changed and become much more prevalent.

the reality was that it simply resulted in more creative litigation with claimants attempting to argue their dismissal was for one of the automatically unfair reasons (for which no qualifying period of service is necessary) or was on the ground

of making a protected disclosure (whistleblowing).

The fee regime in the Employment Tribunals was introduced in July 2013 resulting in a substantial decrease of lower-value claims and the trend then became focussed on higher-value discrimination cases. Consequently, my focus changed to conducting larger-scale discrimination litigation for major local employers. Following the abolishment of fees in July 2017, the tide turned again resulting in huge backlogs of work in the Employment Tribunal and a nationwide Judge recruitment drive.

In 2018, I made the move from being a partner in a large East Midlands practice to setting up my own niche employment law firm, ksabLAW. Operating my own firm has been a rewarding and enjoyable experience and I have benefitted hugely from the support of the local legal community and the contacts I have made over the years, to all of whom I am grateful.

Not long after setting up ksabLAW, Covid-19 hit in March 2020 and with it, the Government's first reference to 'furlough' (a new concept to all employment lawyers, requiring a Google definition search!), the term becoming common parlance and one of the most used during the pandemic. This was a 'ground-

The trends I'm seeing are major issues with recruitment and staff retention and a large increase in issues surrounding mental health with employers needing to be more alive to making reasonable adjustments in the workplace.

breaking' time for practitioners requiring free-hand drafting of furlough agreements in the hope that they would cover all the necessary requirements and urgently arranged 'on line' advisory sessions. Understandably, both employers and employees had many questions for which no one really knew the answers or how the Government, HMRC or the Tribunals would interpret the hastily

implemented legislation – so a challenging and interesting time as you can imagine!

And what of the last 12 months? The trends I'm seeing are major issues with recruitment and staff retention and a large increase in issues surrounding mental health with employers needing to be

more alive to making reasonable adjustments in the workplace.

When reflecting on my career to date, I'm grateful for the experiences I've had and the people I've worked with. The specialism I chose to practice has remained interesting and diverse, making the journey a challenging one but far from boring and I look forward to what lies ahead.



Seamless Transition: Mastering IT Support in Rothley Law's Acquisition



Shoosmiths private client business, which included several divisions, was acquired by Rothley Law this summer. Anil Motivaras of Giga Ops tells us how he managed the IT merger for this transaction.

The 41-strong team from Shoosmiths and their clients were transferred to Rothley Law this July.

The acquisition was supported by IT support service Giga Ops, led by managing director Anil Motivaras.

He said: "We can play a crucial role in ensuring that legal organisations

have a secure, efficient, and compliant IT configuration. By leveraging our expertise and support, legal professionals can focus on their core tasks while leaving IT concerns to the professionals, ultimately improving the overall effectiveness and security of the legal practice."

Based in Hamilton, Leicester, Giga Ops (giga-ops.com, 03300 10 10 98) provides advice on IT, security, cloud services, telecoms and networks.

Below, Anil shares the details of the role they played in the acquisition and their ongoing support.

The client

Our client, multi-service legal company Rothley Law, acquired the private client, disputed wills and trusts, and court of protection teams from the top rated national law firm Shoosmiths. The transfer included 41 staff who were set up in 4 new Rothley Law offices across the UK, and thousands of client files. Rothley wanted a reliable provider who could guarantee a smooth process and be there for emergency situations. Giga Ops played a key part across all elements of the process, to ensure a smooth transition and a secure, compliant IT infrastructure across the group. Giga Ops continue to act as Rothley Law's in-house IT team as they did before for many years.

Our key objectives

- Assess and consult with company leaders
- Liaising with Shoosmiths on the successful client and employee data transfers
- Working with third party specialists on the transfer of client data from an in house CRM to a specialist legal CRM.
- Setting up laptops, the communication infrastructure (VOIP and mobile , office and data security.)
- Rolling out IT hardware, across 4 offices on launch day
- Training teams and trouble shooting
- Acting as the in-house IT team, leading IT discussions and meetings
- Ensure IT security and compliance
- Recommend hardware, software, and cybersecurity enhancements
- Manage and support infrastructure
- Provide telecoms solutions and support

The impact

We provided continuous support from start to finish during Rothley's acquisition journey acting as their team of Internal IT experts.

Giga Ops led the IT discussions with third parties to design and ensure a smooth transition and onboarding process. We successfully moved users and data, from one legal firm to another, got users setup and working in the new organisation across 4 offices on day 1, and we continue to provide ongoing support.

The value of legal companies enlisting the help of Giga Ops IT services either as an outsourced IT function, or for acquisitions or projects lies in the ability to leverage expertise, ensure data security, and compliance, achieve cost savings, and maintain a reliable and efficient IT infrastructure. This allows legal professionals to focus on their legal work while leaving IT concerns to the experts, safe in the knowledge, that we provide ongoing end-to-end, line of business, mobile device management, telephony, hardware, and software/applications support.

Their feedback

"Our group has been using Giga Ops for over seven years and only had positive experiences. We needed someone we trusted for such an important acquisition. Giga ops are experienced in understanding the additional data security responsibilities that are required for regulated firms and can operate professionally at scale"

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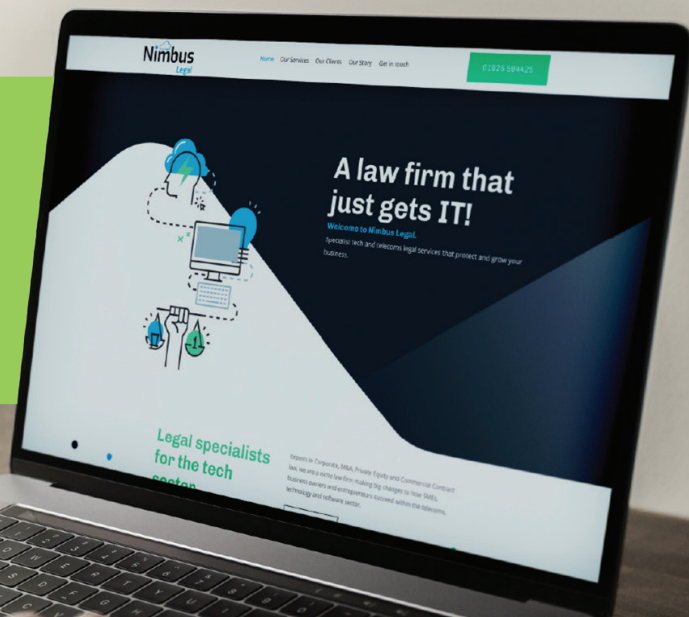
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Member Spotlight - Nick Foreman of K4 Law



Shining the spotlight on an LLS member each issue, we invite you to learn about your local legal representatives, discovering everything from how they utilise their membership to what they do for hobbies



How long have you been an LLS member?

On and off since about 1994.

What is the best thing about your job?

The three-piece suits mainly.

What was the best LLS event you have attended and why?

The first LLS Ball after Covid. It was a chance to see our friends face to face for the first time in a long time.

What do you look after your health and wellbeing?

I have a personal trainer and drink Earl Grey.

Who is your favourite on-screen legal professional?

Does Sherlock Holmes count? (as played by Basil Rathbone).

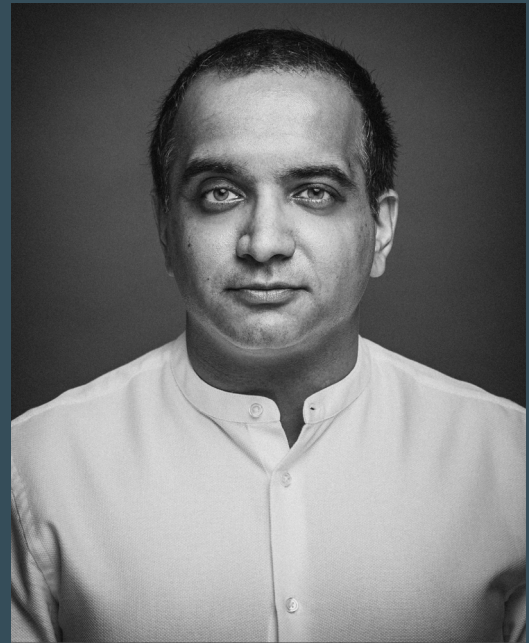
What advice would you give to new LLS members?

Join in and be wholehearted.



Words are great to communicate,
I chose imagery...
Love and live with passion...

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A new supportive network for professional women

Top business women interviewed as they launch an exciting new venture to support fellow women in business and leadership

Three multi-talented female entrepreneurs have joined forces to launch a brand new venture entitled The Amira Forum to provide personal growth and leadership training for women in professional sectors and those running their own businesses across the UK.

The Amira Forum was founded by Dr Glynis Wright MBE, who has a background in business and law, along with marketing consultant and qualified professional business coach Jenny Cross, and entrepreneur and tech expert Leanne Bonner-Cooke MBE. Each will bring to the table their unique expertise in female leadership drawn from a collective pool of over 90 years in business in professional services, consultancy services and technology.

Jenny said: "The forum will bring together businesswomen and women in leadership positions within their professions where they will have access to the expertise of the founders in the form of exclusive training, support, mentoring and consultancy. They will also have the added benefit of connecting with other similarly positioned women within The Amira Forum membership. The time is now, and



we are delighted to be bringing Amira to the female business community."

The unique nature of the forum allows essential space for open and honest conversation. Glynis explained: "All attendees of The Amira Forum will be asked to sign

"The forum will bring together businesswomen and women in leadership positions within their professions where they will have access to the expertise of the founders in the form of exclusive training, support, mentoring and consultancy."

a privacy agreement which means that the cohort of 15 women taking part will be able to speak frankly and openly about their perception of their areas of vulnerability and weakness in leadership, creating a space where experiences can be shared freely in order to create real personal growth. In order for this to work really well, all 15 of the cohort will be from non-compete industries."

The pioneering forum will comprise of a group of just 15 women working with Glynis, Jenny and Leanne over a six-month cycle. Sessions

will run monthly between 9am and 1pm. Each member will also gain a 30-minute one-to-one session with the founders.

Once the course cycle is complete, the founders will encourage the community of women to continue in their support for one another.

Leanne commented: "We want the women who have shared and learnt together on the forum to continue their support beyond the course itself, forging lasting and concrete networking relationships, and we hope to bring all cohorts together once a year for an annual Amira Forum conference.

To join The Amira Forum and to gain exclusive access to the network for £350+ VAT per month, email info@amiraforum.co.uk to register interest.

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and welcome our new President
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Sponsorship Opportunities

With many events taking place throughout the next 12 months, the society is seeking the involvement of company leaders who wish to align their brand with the legal profession.

Matrix event
6pm – 9pm
Monday, 19 February

Civic Dinner
7pm-11pm
Thursday, 14 March

**International Women's Day
Charity Fashion Show**
6pm – 9pm
Thursday, 4 March

**Leicestershire Law Society
Annual Awards**
7pm – 12am
Friday, 17 May

Summer Garden Party
6pm – 8pm
Thursday, 13 June

Professional Network
5pm – 7pm
Friday, 30 August

Contact Charlotte Anderson-Dilkes via office@leicestershirelawsociety.org.uk
to enquire about sponsorship opportunities.

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Our charities of 2024

Each year, the President of Leicestershire Law Society selects their chosen charities to support for the duration of their tenure.

Newly appointed President Bhumika Parmar has chosen three local causes to support whose service users represent a range of demographics.

Over the next 12 months, society members will be able to join in a selection of activities where they'll be invited together to raise both awareness and funds for these great causes.

Save the date
for our charity
fashion show at
Winstanley House!
March 4
6pm-9pm



Help the Homeless Leicester which helps to improve the lives of vulnerable people and achieve relief of homelessness and rough sleeping.



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Learn more about the work we have been doing across Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland for over 50 years on our website www.Menphys.Org.Uk or scan the QR Code

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The first woman Justice of the Supreme Court visits University of Leicester



History maker and stalwart campaigner for a more diverse judiciary, Lady Hale's values align with those of Leicestershire Law Society and our members were keen to meet her this October

Known for championing diversity in the judiciary, Brenda Marjorie Hale, Baroness Hale of Richmond, is an inspiration to those working or aspiring to work in the legal sector.

In a joint event between Leicestershire Law Society, DG Legal and the University of Leicester, Lady Hale visited the university to deliver a talk, 'Law and Life' to secondary school and university students. From her, they learnt first-hand what a successful legal career looks like. The society also invited several members who were eager to meet with Lady Hale.

Then President of LLS, Gina Samuel-Richards said: "Lady Hale is a remarkable individual who has dedicated her life to the pursuit of justice and the betterment of our legal system. The event referenced the legacy of the former President of the Supreme Court in England & Wales, a jurist whose contributions to the field of law has left an indelible mark on our nation."

Yorkshire-born, Lady Hale was the first woman and youngest person to be appointed to the Law Commission. What's more, she also became the first female law lord. Additionally, She was also the second woman to be appointed to the Court of Appeal in 1999.

"During her tenure, she exhibited the highest standards of judicial excellence. Her wisdom, legal acumen, and impartiality set an example for all those who aspire to serve the cause of justice. She has been a beacon of hope for those seeking redress, a guardian of our constitutional principles, and a steadfast defender of the fundamental rights enshrined in our laws," Gina said as she welcomed her to the stage.

Lady Hale has a special interest in the advancement of diversity in the legal profession, especially in increasing the number of women and people of colour being admitted as Judges, which was a topic of discussion at the

event. She also talked about taking advantage of opportunities and taking well-reasoned risks if these advance career opportunities or the development of law, which is something our guests found valuable to learn more about.

Students also learnt some of the cases she had worked on, including when making decisions on compensation to parents of unwanted pregnancies due to medical negligence as well as decisions around a young man's funeral rites that were surrounded by conflict between his adoptive and birth families.

The students were interested to hear how the law impacts our everyday lives as well as Lady Hale's



career progression and how she utilised her position to lobby for better laws, especially laws that affect women and children. She also discussed the move to a more diverse judiciary, her being one of first cohort of women to sit on the UK Supreme Court, and the importance to make way for more women judges to take a place on the UKSC.

“Her leadership has been characterised by a deep sense of compassion and a genuine concern for the welfare of the marginalised and vulnerable members of society. She champions causes that seek to redress historical injustices, always with an unwavering commitment to the principles of fairness and equity.”

The talk was followed by an epic Q&A session and the society was impressed to hear from many of the students who had very well thought out questions. There was then time to take photos and she was very gracious handling the demands, of even the solicitors who wanted their photo taken with the “Beyoncé of the Legal World”.

“In addition to her distinguished judicial career, our former President is a tireless advocate for legal



education and professional development. She understands the importance of nurturing the next generation of legal minds and ensuring that the legal profession continued to evolve and adapt to the changing needs of society. Her steadfast dedication to the principles of justice, fairness, and the rule of law has left an enduring impact that will continue to shape our legal system for generations to come,” Gina added.

“We honour the exemplary service

and unwavering commitment of our former President of the Supreme Court. She has not only enriched our legal heritage but also inspired all of us to strive for a more just and equitable society.”

As a society, we are forever grateful for Lady Hale’s contributions to the law, and her legacy will forever be etched in the annals of our legal history.

Follow more of Lady Hale’s future engagements at theguardian.com/law/brenda-hale.



Baroness Hale: a biography

After graduating from Cambridge in 1966, Brenda Marjorie Hale, Lady Hale of Richmond, DBE taught law at Manchester University from 1966 to 1984, also qualifying as a barrister and practising for a while at the Manchester Bar. She specialised in family and social welfare law.

In 1984, she was the first woman to be appointed to the Law Commission. Important legislation resulted from the work of her team at the Commission includes the Children Act 1989, the Family Law Act 1996, and the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

In 1994 she became a High Court judge, the first to have made her career as

an academic and public servant rather than a practising barrister. In 1999 she was the second woman to be promoted to the Court of Appeal, before becoming the first woman Law Lord.

In 2004, Lady Hale became the United Kingdom’s first woman Lord of Appeal in Ordinary after a varied career as an academic lawyer, law reformer, and judge. She then became the first woman Justice of the Supreme Court in 2009.

Lady Hale took up appointment as Deputy President of the Court in 2013 before becoming President of the Supreme Court in 2017.

Credit: Supreme Court



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ABOUT

MEET PAUL:

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OUR FOCUS:

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Electric Vehicle (EV) Consulting: We help businesses make informed decisions regarding EV adoption. This involves assessing the most suitable EVs for your specific needs, evaluating charging infrastructure, and ensuring a smooth transition. By doing so, we help clients reduce their carbon footprint, lower operating costs, and stay ahead of the curve in the rapidly evolving world of transportation.

OUR ADVANTAGE:

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GIVING BACK:

When I first founded my business over a decade ago, I realised that networking would be crucial in growing it. I quickly discovered BNI, a business networking organisation. I quickly joined a local group and it has helped me immensely over the years.

At BNI, I found like-minded people who shared my passion for helping local businesses grow. I found that by giving to others first, I could create strong, long-lasting relationships with fellow business owners, which helped me secure more opportunities.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

Our commitment to supporting mental health is reflected in the fact that we have actively supported LAMP, a mental health charity based in Leicestershire and Rutland, for over five years through various events and sponsorships. We also support local sports groups such as Leicester Forest East Rugby Club, recognising their excellent work nurturing young players. Our sponsorship has helped the club provide resources to develop the skills and abilities of young players.

My wife and I are devoted Leicester City season ticket holders, and we cannot forget the historic 2015-16 season. I take great pride in being able to supply a new car to the legend Claudio Ranieri. His exceptional leadership, tactical skills, and unwavering commitment to the team made that season possible and will always be remembered by us and the entire Leicester City community.

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In memory Of David Brunning

It is with the greatest sadness that Midland Circuit announces the death of HH David Brunning

His Honour David Brunning died on October 27, aged 80. He leaves behind a widow, Dee, who he married in 1967, three sons and six grandchildren.

A grammar schoolboy from Burton-on-Trent, he read history at Worcester College, Oxford; then read for the Bar whilst working for Leicester City Council. He did pupillage under Brian Woods, who generously never cashed the cheque David wrote to him for this; and joined Brian's chambers at King Street, Leicester.

He undertook a broad range of common law work, although his court work was predominantly criminal. Active on Circuit, and enjoying food and wine, he organised several circuit and Bar Mess dinners, taking to the kitchen to cater at least one of them. Both of his pupils went onto the bench – Paul Atkinson and Hilary Watson.

Appointed to the Circuit Bench in 1988, he sat in Grimsby and Lincoln, before moving to be designated civil judge and designated family

judge in Nottingham in 1994, where he enjoyed a partnership with HHJ (later Mr. Justice) MacDuff. His last judicial move was to be DFJ in Leicester, from 2004 to his retirement in 2008. While working full time, he sat as a Deputy High Court Judge in both the Queen's Bench and Family Divisions, in the TCC, and on the Mental Health Review Tribunal. In retirement, he continued to do a significant amount of work on the MHRT.

Many members of the profession will be forever grateful to David for his encouragement and support.

Away from work, he enjoyed walking, wine, and military history; teaming up with a number of others for tours to battlefields in France, Belgium & Holland. The balance of the tours can be guessed at from Gen Ted Burgess's description of them as "battlefield tours", and from the contrast between the sumptuous evening meals organised by Dick Pollard and the varied picnics that David sourced, eaten with the implements that gave the

group their name: "les couteaux plastiques".

In retirement, he and Dee split their time between their home in Leicestershire and Sark in the Channel Islands, an island the family truly love, and which David had been visiting for almost 70 years. David spent this summer there, walking up and down to beaches, and swimming in the sea, as well as eating and drinking well. He leaves well-stocked cellars in both homes.

The funeral will be a private family occasion, but there will be a celebration and thanksgiving for his life with refreshments afterwards. This will be held at St James the Greater, London Road, Leicester LE2 1NE at 11.00 on Saturday, November 25.

It would be helpful to have an idea of numbers, so if prospective attendees could email David's son Mat at mdb@no5.com, it would be appreciated. The nearest car park is the Granville Road car park, LE1 7RY.



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