

[View this email in your browser](#)

You are receiving this email as you have expressed an interest in the work of the APPG on Legal Aid.



## The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Legal Aid

**APPG on Legal Aid Bulletin**

**12th Edition - October 2018**

---

Dear Colleague,

Welcome to the 12th bulletin from the APPG on Legal Aid in celebration of Justice Week. This edition has three sections:

1. Upcoming Justice Week Events APPG Meeting – Access to Justice-What Next?

- Westminster Hall Debate – The Future of Legal Aid

2. APPG+ Training Events

- An Introduction to Legal Aid
- An Introduction to Housing Law

3. Legal Aid news

- LASPO Post Implementation Review
  - Justice Week
  - APPG on Legal Aid submission to the LASPO Review
  - News from the Sector
  - Justice Questions
- 

**1. Justice Week Events**

**APPG Meeting – Justice Week – Tuesday, 30 October 2018 (10-11.30 Committee room 14)**

The APPG on Legal Aid together with The Law Society will be hosting a panel discussion on the topic “Access to Justice – What Next?” on Tuesday, 30 October 2018 in Committee Room 14. We are delighted to be joined by Lucy Frazer QC MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Ministry of Justice, Richard Burgon, Shadow Secretary of State for Justice and Shadow Lord Chancellor, Andrew Walker QC Chair of The Bar Council and Simon Davis and Vice-President of The Law Society.

Readers of the bulletin are welcome to attend the meeting. If you would like to do so [please contact us](#).

**Westminster Hall debate Thursday, 1 November 2018 1.30-4.30 – The Future of Legal Aid**

Andy Slaughter, MP and Vice-Chair of the APPG on Legal Aid and Alistair Carmichael MP requested a debate on Legal Aid post the LASPO review. The debate will last for three hours and has the support of nearly thirty MPs from across the parties. It would be fantastic to hear from as many different representatives from the sector and we hope to see as many of you there as possible. The debate also forms part of [More United's campaign](#) to reintroduce properly funded early legal advice.

## **2. APPG+ Training Sessions**

### **Free training – An Introduction to Housing Law and an Introduction to Legal Aid**

On Tuesday 30 October (4.30-6pm) we will be offering an Introduction to Legal Aid course through the House of Commons Library. This will take place in the MacMillan Room, Portcullis House. Training will be given by Matt Howgate of DG Legal and will focus on legal issues to be aware of when advising constituents, useful tools and resources for busy caseworkers and when referrals to law centres or solicitors may be appropriate.

On Friday, 30 November 2018 there will be a one day course on “An Introduction to Housing Law for caseworkers”. Four practitioners from various corners of the world of Housing law will be covering the following topics:

- Security of tenure - an overview of the most common tenancies in the public and private sector and associated security of tenure.
- Disrepair – the remedies available to tenants who need repairs to their homes.
- Advising tenants facing eviction.
- Homelessness – an overview of the assistance local authorities should offer and to whom. This will include new duties introduced from 3 April 2018.
- Social housing – tenants’ succession rights/removing & adding names to a tenancy agreement/termination of joint tenancies/applying for social housing and transfers.

Training will be given by Diane Astin of Deighton Pierce Glynn (author of the ‘Handbook of Housing Law’), Tessa Buchanan and Connor Johnston (Garden Court Chambers and co-authors of ‘Housing Allocation and Homelessness Law’) and Giles Peaker (Partner at Anthony Gold Solicitors and the writer of the Nearly Legal blog).

If you are interested in attending this course [please contact us](#).

## **3. Legal Aid News**

### **LASPO Post-Implementation Review**

We have asked the MOJ's LASPO Review Team for an update on progress and they have noted that:

'The evidence gathering phase of the PIR has now closed, and as a review team we are very grateful for the many organisations, providers, academics and others who have contributed to helping us build a robust evidence base.

We are intending to publish the review later this year. In the meantime, if you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact the team at [lasporeviewmoj@justice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:lasporeviewmoj@justice.gsi.gov.uk).'

### **Justice Week**

Monday 29 October sees the start of kick-off of Justice Week – a new initiative set up by the three legal professional bodies; the Law Society, the Bar Council and the Chartered Institute of Legal Executives (CILEx) to boost the profile of justice and the rule of law.

Justice Week will run between **Monday 29 October and Friday 2 November**.

The launch event will be held on Monday 29 October at 18:00 - 20:00 at CMS Cameron McKenna Nabarro Olswang LLP, London EC4N 6AF 'Does Justice Need A Makeover Re-branding our National Asset'

View the full Justice Week programme [here](#).

### **APPG on Legal Aid submission to the LASPO Review**

Earlier this year, the APPG on Legal Aid, with the help of the House of Commons Library, sent out a short survey to each MP office in England and Wales. MPs' offices are an integral part of the advice and casework infrastructure of local communities. Many, probably most, MPs and their caseworkers have built relationships with other providers in their constituencies - CABs, Law Centres, solicitors and charities. Signposting or even referring constituents with problems goes two ways. We wanted to find out more about how this function is operating as demand for help rises and services are under increasing pressure. We were particularly interested in seeing whether MPs had felt the impact of Legal Aid reductions and the consequent impact that cuts to Legal Aid have had on the advice sector. Over the course of April and May 2018 we received replies and anecdotes from 249 offices. These replies were collated and submitted to the MOJ team as part of the LASPO review.

Our submission highlights the problems of access to justice left by the lack of legal aid providers and reduced scope and eligibility for civil legal aid with more than half of respondents believing that the volume and complexity of their casework has increased over the last few years.

## **News from the Sector**

### **Means v Reality Report from Public Law Project**

The Public Law Project has just published a briefing called 'The gap between the legal aid means regulations and financial reality' by Isaac Richardson.

You can download it [here](#).

### **Children's Rights Alliance Report**

Every year the Children's Rights Alliance for England (CRAE) assesses the UK's progress on implementing the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child for its 'State of Children's Rights in England' report. 'We would like to know where you think there has been any progress since the 2017 report, where the Government needs to do more, and where there has been retrogression in realising children's rights,' it says. 'We would also welcome evidence on any new or emerging issues that you think we should draw attention to in this year's report.'

[More here](#).

### **Home Office asks lawyers to help simplify immigration letters**

The government, in response to the parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights *Windrush generation detention*, will ask lawyers how letters to people navigating a 'complex' immigration system can be improved, as MPs take a closer look at proposals to reform immigration detention.

For more information, click [here](#).

### **Calculations for criminal legal aid trial fees could be a big minus for justice**

The crisis in the criminal justice system is so acute that an independent review into the economic sustainability of legal aid is vital - for both trial preparation and representation in court - to stop the exodus of criminal lawyers from the profession, the Law Society warned earlier this month.

Commenting on Ministry of Justice (MoJ) proposals for reforms to the Advocates' Graduated Fee Scheme (AGFS) - a payment scheme for advocacy in serious criminal cases, such as robbery, rape and murder - Law Society President Christina Blacklaws said: "We welcome the recognition that more money is needed. But the £15m that the MoJ is proposing to invest will

not reverse the current recruitment and retention crisis among solicitors and barristers specialising in criminal law."

[More here.](#)

### **Calls for emergency legal aid for relatives of those who die in custody**

Emergency legal aid must be provided for bereaved relatives forced to attend inquests because their loved one died in custody, prominent campaigners are urging.

A year after a [Home Office-backed review](#) recommended automatic funding of legal representation without means-testing for families in cases in which state agencies, such as the police, prison service or NHS, have been involved in a death, its author, Dame Eilish Angiolini QC, has called for interim measures to speed up the official response.

[More here.](#)

### **Liberty to challenge Legal Aid Agency refusal to help residents fight local council abuse of power**

Human rights organisation Liberty has taken the first steps towards a legal challenge against the Legal Aid Agency for blocking access to justice for residents seeking to take local authorities to court.

The Agency will not grant legal aid to help people who cannot afford to pay lawyers challenge potentially unlawful Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs). Liberty is seeking to have this policy overturned and is calling on the public to help it succeed by donating via crowdfunding platform [CrowdJustice](#).

[More here.](#)

### **Justice Questions in October**

Richard Burgon MP (Leeds East) asked the Secretary of State for Justice, how many victims of domestic violence have been refused **legal aid** when applying for a non-molestation order in each of the last five years.

Emma Dent Coad MP (Kensington) asked the Secretary of State for Justice, whether his Department plans to create a dedicated fund for the legal needs of the affected community arising from the Grenfell Tower fire.

Martyn Day MP (Linlithgow and East Falkirk) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether his Department plans to provide (a) legal advice and (b) assistance to anyone whose application for settled status is refused or rejected.

Yasmin Qureshi MP (Bolton South East) asked the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent assessment he has made of the merits of abolishing means-testing for **legal aid** at inquests.

Sandy Martin MP (Ipswich) asked the Secretary of State for Justice, whether he is taking steps to ensure that **legal aid** is available for immigration cases in Suffolk; and if he will make a statement.

Sandy Martin MP (Ipswich) asked the Secretary of State for Justice, whether the **Legal Aid** Agency plans to provide contracts for immigration **legal aid** to advisers in Ipswich.

Sandy Martin MP (Ipswich) asked the Secretary of State for Justice, what plans he has to ensure an adequate level of legal support and advice to provide for the projected increase in unaccompanied child asylum seekers dispersed to Ipswich under the National Transfer Scheme.

Jo Stevens MP (Cardiff Central) asked the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment his Department has made of the (a) number and (b) geographical distribution of practicing **legal aid** solicitors.

You can read all of the questions and answers [here](#)

**Rohini Teather**  
**Project Worker**  
**26 October 2018**

Please note that you are receiving this email because you have expressed an interest in the work that we do or have attended one of our events. Please contact [Rohini.teather@lapg.co.uk](mailto:Rohini.teather@lapg.co.uk) should you wish to be removed from this distribution list.

1.

[Visit the APPG on Legal Aid website](#)



The APPG on  
Legal Aid is co-sponsored  
by the Legal Aid  
Practitioners Group



In association with  
Young Legal Aid Lawyers



Supported by  
The Legal Education  
Foundation.

### **About the APPG on Legal Aid**

The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Legal Aid aims to promote parliamentary and public understanding of the importance of the role of publicly funded legal services. It is chaired by Karen Buck MP. Secretariat support is provided jointly by the Legal Aid Practitioners Group (LAPG) together with Young Legal Aid Lawyers (YLAL) with funding from The Legal Education Foundation.

For more information contact:

[rohini.teather@lapg.co.uk](mailto:rohini.teather@lapg.co.uk)

### **About the APPG Plus Project**

LAPG and the APPG on Legal Aid have been funded by The Legal Education Foundation to engage with MPs and councillors and their caseworkers to ensure that there is a good understanding of what is left in legal aid in the wake of LASPO, and to offer constructive advice, resources and training on how busy MPs and their caseworkers can engage better with lawyers and advice charities in the legal aid sector. In doing so, we aim to assess current access to justice issues facing the public and to help inform future decision making at a policy level.

*Copyright Â© 2018 Legal Aid Practitioners Group, All rights reserved.*

You are receiving this email because you have expressed an interest in the work of the APPG on legal aid or generally in issues affecting access to justice.

### **Our mailing address is:**

Legal Aid Practitioners Group

12 Baylis Road

London, England SE1 7AA

United Kingdom



[Add us to your address book](#)

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).