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LAPG Member Update

Issue 28 of 2025

LAPG Annual Legal Aid Conference – 20 October 2025

We are delighted to announce that we are now taking bookings for this year's LAPG Annual Legal Aid Conference, which takes place on Monday 20th of October 2025 at A&O Shearman's offices in London.



Earlier this year the legal aid sector was ambushed by the news that the LAA's digital systems had been breached by a cyber attack. Discovering that millions of pieces of sensitive client and provider data, dating back as far as 2007, had been stolen, the LAA took its systems offline on 19 May. The result for

providers has been months of chaos, stress and anxiety as you try to negotiate changeable, complex contingency measures and a vacuum where once there stood a billing process. This year's conference will therefore include a range of content focussing on the LAA's contingency measures and how we claw our way out of the crisis. We're bringing together practitioners, policy specialists,

management consultants and LAA experts to discuss how to manage during business as very unusual, and how we get back to some level of normality.

Along with cyber breach content, we have our usual mixture of workshops covering issues relevant to legal aid lawyers in their daily practice as well as management sessions for all levels of manager. We're catering for students and junior lawyers and have sessions of general interest to all such as legal aid policy development and cost maximisation. Our conference therefore has more than a little something for everyone, along with a chance to network and benefit from the support and camaraderie that comes from being part of this wonderful sector.

Our keynote will be delivered by Gina Miller, the campaigner who twice took on the government in relation to important constitutional principles. The Article 50 and prorogation cases sought to uphold parliamentary sovereignty and ensure that the government acts lawfully, issues close to the hearts of legal aid lawyers.

We have extended an invitation to the Minister with responsibility for legal aid and court services, Sarah Mackman MP, and will adjust the programme if she is able to attend.

This year's plenary sessions will cover two topical, business-critical issues: the risks and rewards of adopting AI systems and civil and criminal legal aid policy development. The second plenary will be adjusted depending on where we are with the restoration of the LAA's digital systems.

The current programme is set out below. [You can download a PDF version here.](#)

[You can book tickets here](#)

The Early Bird offer, which runs until the 29th of September, together with support and sponsorship from John M Hayes Ltd, Communicourt and A&O Shearman, means that the prices are very competitive.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Conference Programme

09:15 - 10:00 - Registration, Coffee/Tea and Sponsors' Exhibitions**10:00 - 11:00 - Plenary Session - Welcome & Keynote Speech**

Welcome: Nicola Mackintosh KC (Hon), Co-chair of LAPG

Keynote Speech: Gina Miller, Transparency and Social Justice Campaigner who initiated both the Article 50 Brexit legal challenge and the Prorogation of Parliament legal challenge

Minister Sackman invited to address conference on current and future legal aid policy

11:05 - 11:45 - Workshop Session 1**Workshop Session 1a - Supporting Your Team – Managing Neurodivergent Employees**

Jenny Beck KC (Hon), Director of Beck Fitzgerald, founding member of FLANC (Family Law Advice for the Neurodivergent Community) will discuss both the practical and procedural aspects of creating a supportive and inclusive environment for neurodivergent employees.

Workshop Session 1b - Current Issues in Immigration & Asylum Legal Aid

"Smash the gangs, slash the boats, one in one out and computer says "no"- is the policy working or is reform the answer?" Speakers: Jawaid Luqmani, Founding Partner, Luqmani Thompson. Other speakers TBC.

Workshop Session 1c - Current Issues in Criminal Legal Aid

Casey Jenkins, President of LCCSA and Rakesh Bhasin, LAPG Advisory Committee Member will address topical issues for criminal defence practitioners.

11:45 - 12:00 - Coffee/Tea Break**12:00 - 13:10 - Plenary - AI in the Legal Aid World: To Use or Not to Use, that is the Question**

Panel discussion/debate: Matthew Howgate, Consultant; Giles Peaker, Partner, Anthony Gold and Founder and Editor of the Nearly Legal Blog; Speakers invited from the Ada Lovelace Institute and the Open University's Open Justice Centre

13:10 - 14:10 - Lunch Break & Sponsors' Exhibition

13:30 - 13:50 - AGM for LAPG Members

14:10 - 14:55 - Workshop Session 2

Workshop Session 2a - Supporting Your Team – Managing Through a Crisis

Experienced sector consultants Matthew Howgate and Vicky Ling will discuss business continuity planning and disaster recovery. This session will focus on the LAA contingency processes and wider impact of and recovery from the LAA data breach.

Workshop Session 2b - Current Issues in Family Legal Aid

Jenny Beck KC (Hon) and Lucy Verity will discuss topical issues for both private and public family legal aid practitioners. Chair: Beverley Watkins

Workshop Session 2c - Current Issues in Housing & Debt Legal Aid

Rosaleen Kilbane, Partner, Community Law Partnership and Kate Pasfield, Director of Legal Aid Policy, LAPG will discuss current issues for Housing & Debt legal aid providers, such as Awaab's Law, planned increases to housing legal aid fees, and the development of online possession processes.

14:55 - 15:10 - Coffee/Tea Break

15:10 - 15:55 - Workshop Session 3

Workshop Session 3a - A Career in Legal Aid

Members of Young Legal Aid Lawyers will discuss how to develop your career in legal aid. This session is aimed at students who are considering a career in legal aid and at junior legal aid practitioners.

Workshop Session 3b - Supporting Your Team - PAMELA Support Network

Dr Laura Janes (KC Hon), and Kate Muir, women’s health expert, documentary maker and author, will discuss LAPG’s PAMELA support network and how to support both colleagues and clients who are (peri)menopausal.

Workshop Session 3c - Cost Maximisation

Costs experts from John M Hayes Ltd will discuss how to avoid errors and cashflow issues, minimise costs reductions and get paid quickly. The session will also provide practical hints and tips on costs maximisation.

16:00 - 17:00 - Plenary and Closing Address

The cyber attack on the LAA's IT systems has had profound impact on both legal aid providers and clients trying to access help and support. Over recent months, the LAA has introduced a range of contingency measures after deciding to take all of its digital systems offline to prevent further attacks and improve system security. Panel members will discuss the state of play by the time of the conference, looking at issues such as ongoing contingency measures, the recoupment of the contingency payments made to providers, and compensating providers for the additional costs they incurred as a result of the data breach. (Note: if LAA systems are restored and legal aid processes have returned to business as usual, this panel will consider wider legal aid policy and campaigning issues.)

17:00 - 18:00 - Drinks Reception

Join us for drinks and nibbles to round off the event.

Booking Your Place

Ticket Type	Early Bird (Until 29th Sept)	Standard (From 30th Sept)
LAPG member	£150 (plus VAT)	£200 (plus VAT)
Non-LAPG member	£225 (plus VAT)	£275 (plus VAT)
YLAL, JFFs, SWSQFs	£20 (plus VAT)	£30 (plus VAT)

There is a 10% discount if you purchase multiple tickets. Just add the code '**multiple**' to the discount box before payment on the Eventbrite page. It will get automatically applied.

We have a limited number of concessions to off-set travel costs for legal aid practitioners based outside of London. If you would like to inquire about receiving one of these tickets, please email Andrea:
andrea.shumaker@lapg.co.uk

[Get your tickets here](#)

Terms and Conditions

A full refund will be given if a place is cancelled up to 7 days before the conference and no refunds in the last 7 days before the conference. A substitute delegate from your or another organisation will be accepted at any time before the event.

Please note, we reserve the right to change the running order and we may need to make changes to the final programme.

We're really looking forward to seeing so many of our friends from across the legal aid sector in October - we all need it after such an incredibly difficult few months.

Where will we be by then in terms of the LAA getting it's systems back online? No one knows for sure, which is why we'll cover these key issues at the conference to give you as much practical help and guidance as possible. However, look out later today (the 20th of August) for official LAA comms setting out their current plans for system restoration.

Take care one and all and, as ever, if you need our help or support, please do get in touch,

Chris Minnoch, CEO [@ChrisLAPG](#)

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Thank you for being brave enough to be part of the LAPG community!





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