



10/02/23

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Civil and Criminal Legal Aid News

Urgent note on CCMS Update

Expect some official comms from the LAA on this today, but the agency has just notified us that there will be a scheduled update to CCMS on Monday. They have noted:

"We're releasing an upgrade that will finally let us properly manage recoupments of counsel POAs separately from solicitor bills. As I am sure you will appreciate, this is a significant improvement within CCMS, particularly for barristers in the VHCC space that I am hoping will mean a significant improvement in paying VHCC bills first time.

*Unfortunately we've only just learned that because this is a significant update to the behind the scenes billing rules within CCMS, it may mean that **any bill currently in draft in the Portal is at risk of being deleted on Monday night when the upgrade is rolled out (projected for approx. 5pm currently)**. We don't think they will delete, but we can't guarantee that they won't, so our advice is to complete and submit draft bills ASAP.*

Claim Upload will be unaffected by the change, so those users should be able to proceed as normal."

(our emphasis added)



Legal Aid
Agency

Civil Legal Aid Review / ROCLA

First things first. What are we going to call the Civil Legal Aid Review? The Criminal Legal Aid Review veered from CLAR to CLAIR at times but essentially nabbed CLAR. There has been a move to call the Civil Legal Aid Review RoCLA as in Review of Civil Legal Aid. For now, we will call it ROCLA because it is easy to type and we have added it to our dictionary.

Secondly, a big thanks to all members who have offered to help us with our response to ROCLA. We are currently discussing our response with other membership groups and speaking to the MOJ to get a better understanding of the scope and purpose of the Review. We will come back to you all soon to discuss how you can get involved. If you would like to support our response and haven't yet been in touch, [please email us](#).



Ministry
of Justice

So, do we now know what ROCLA is going to be about? Well yes, no and um, not sure.

The MOJ has published Terms of Reference (TOR) for ROCLA, although the title suggests that the TOR are relevant to the research component: [Terms of Reference for an Economic Analysis of Civil Legal Aid](#). If you go to the last point for a summary it says:

26. The aim of this review is therefore to provide a set of evidence-based options for moving to a more effective and efficient system of access to civil justice.

If you read it however you will probably find yourself just saying over and over again 'We just need realistic fees'. Will that be addressed?

The Terms of Reference do not reference fees (apart from excluding options for specific individual fees from the economic analysis at para 8), nor do they acknowledge that an unwillingness by successive governments to increase fees, and indeed a propensity to cut fees, is the primary reason for what they describe at para 23 as 'issues with the civil legal aid market'. If you read the TOR carefully they indicate that problems with capacity and coverage appear to be very recent phenomena, or at least that the MOJ has only now become aware of them. Don't forget that as recently as the LASPO PIR report the MOJ declared that the provider base was meeting demand. It must also be noted the MOJ has never tried to measure demand and that the LAA has very superficial systems in place to measure capacity and access (despite the spurious assurance provided by the MOJ at para 22).

Our main concern of course is that the Criminal Legal Aid Review achieved some interim increases in fees but then the urgent recommendation for a 15% increase while further thought was given to the issue of fees, was not enacted as proposed in the Review. So if the MOJ and LAA can ignore urgent recommendations in criminal defence, it can do so for civil. There is a certain feeling of despondency amongst all representative bodies and we are working together to work out how to respond.

There are many issues with the TOR e.g. a narrow focus on 6 areas of law which does not take into account the holistic nature of clients' problems and the interlinked nature of contracts held by providers.

The TOR set out that the Review will consider the civil legal aid system in its entirety; from how services are procured, how well the current system works for users and how civil legal aid impacts the wider justice system.

The Review will cover all eleven contract categories covered by the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012, however, an in-depth analysis will be conducted of the following categories where data has highlighted particular concern with respect to the long-term sustainability of civil legal aid:

- a. Family
- b. Housing (including the Housing Possession Court Duty Scheme)
- c. Mental Health
- d. Education
- e. Discrimination
- f. Immigration

As noted above, we see no reason why the MOJ would exclude the remaining areas of legal aid from this 'in-depth analysis' and, if they are truly interested in determining what clients need, then they should be analysing areas that are no longer in scope, such as employment and large swathes of welfare benefits and debt advice.

What is the timescale? Paragraph 12 is muddled and we have asked for clarification. The general aim is to conclude the 'outcome' by 31 March 2024. The eagle-eyed among you will realise that there could be a general election soon after that (if not before) so politically it is hard to work out if we need to influence this government or the next.

MOJ officials plan to publish some form of interim report in autumn 2023 but were unclear what the purpose of the report would be. However they categorically would not commit to introducing interim measures to make contracts more viable while they carry out the Review. One of the officials described interim measures as 'short-termism' and said that they were looking at long-term solutions. If long-term solutions embrace the MOJ's current obsessions (see below) at the expense of existing models, we should be worried.

The MOJ intends to put two elements of the Review out to tender (we have not yet seen the tender documents so cannot comment on the detail):

- An Economic analysis of the structure of the civil legal aid market and
- A comparative analysis of civil legal aid systems in other countries

At a recent meeting the MOJ noted that, while there is little in the TOR to this effect, there are two other elements to the Review:

- publication of what data can be produced i.e. there is an ongoing internal data gathering process (akin to what happened in Crime and led to the publication of a Data Compendium)
- A user experience research exercise (presumably to understand the experiences of those using the current civil legal aid system)

There will in due course be a call for evidence.

It is worth setting out paragraph 25 in full as it provides a somewhat stark and alarming insight into the starting point for this Review:

25. Our existing evidence base about the civil market and the impact on the market, of specific changes to contracts, is limited. It is difficult for us to answer the following questions, all of which are important for designing the ideal market structure and considering reform.

- a. What interventions will sustain the market and drive a better service for users?
- b. What changes will drive earlier resolution of issues and reduce incidences of problems?
- c. What are the right incentives to attract and retain quality providers?
- d. How can we drive innovation in service delivery in the civil legal aid market?
- e. Does the civil legal aid scheme ensure the right incentives are in place for providers to help us meet our objectives?
- f. What, if any, viable alternatives are there to the current civil legal aid scheme?
- g. How is early legal advice and support best provided?

We are sure that all members reading this will by now be shouting 'you know full well what intervention would work – increase the fees!'

There is plenty within the TOR that suggests that what the MOJ is trying to do is build an evidence-based case for completely reshaping legal aid provision. Given the government and judiciary's current obsessions with ADR, digital delivery and

'early intervention' we should be worried about this if we care about maintaining and funding the current model of specialist lawyers delivering predominantly face-to-face services (even if delivered in part through remote means) to clients with legal issues of varying complexity.

LAPG colleagues have attended the stakeholder meeting, met up with other representative bodies and raised various enquiries with the MOJ to try to improve the Terms of Reference. We have been very vocal as we think the current approach by the MOJ just isn't good enough.

The LAPG Advisory Committee has met to discuss what we should do. Engage? Not engage? Engage only on terms? We are working through options with other groups and will revert to members on our approach but please do feed in to us any thoughts that you have to policy@lapg.co.uk

Director of Legal Aid Casework Annual Report

The CEO of the Legal Aid Agency Jane Harbottle is also the Director of Legal Aid Casework (DOLAC) and her [annual report is now out here](#).

The role of Director of Legal Aid Casework was created under the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012. It involves decision-making on individual legal aid applications. The Director has sole responsibility for individual cases, with the aim of ensuring the independence of decision-making from government.

The report explains the role of the Director, decision-making processes and structure, appeals and review, litigation, accountability, Parliamentary Questions, FOI Act requests, complaints, statistics and equality and diversity.

It would be interesting to hear from members what your experiences are compared to what is stated in the report....

Here are a few of the things we learnt from reading the report (or were reminded of):

- There is a LAA board to support the DOLAC "in ensuring that robust practices are in



place to maintain the independence of the decision-making process for granting legal aid.”

- The roles of the Director and the Chief Executive of the LAA may be held by the same person. However, different accountability and reporting arrangements exist for the two roles. From 8 July 2019 both roles have been held by Jane Harbottle.
- In the section headed *The role of the director* there is a summary of recent and amended Lord Chancellor guidance as well as changes to the regulatory and legislative framework.
- Determinations on individual applications and the functions of the Director are in practice delegated to LAA staff. Specifically, individual case determinations are made by Case Management, a team of around 805 staff. This team is divided into two groups, each managed by a Deputy Director (DD): Civil and Crime Case Management – DD Alistair Adan and Exceptional and Complex Cases Team (ECCT) – DD Dr Samantha Milton.
- This work has been underpinned by the LAA Strategy, published in July, which sets out four key guiding principles for the Agency: being user-centred; getting things right first time, being open and transparent; and becoming a responsive, diverse, learning organisation. All of which will enable the LAA to deliver faster, better outcomes that work for legal aid clients, providers, taxpayers and LAA staff. This is further supported by the LAA’s Customer Service Strategy which focuses on putting its users at the heart of services.
- 50 providers are using the Apply Service (a replacement for CCMS) and over 10,000 domestic abuse cases have been handled through it. (para 16)
- The LAA continued to work closely with HMCTS to support the rollout of the Common Platform in criminal courts, ensuring it can process applications and bills for cases which come through the platform. The platform is now live in 112 courts across England and Wales, and it has processed around 48,000 applications, paying more than 15,000 bills so far. (para 18)
- All determinations made by the Director are subject to a right of internal review where requested. Furthermore, unless the application is for ECF, or the Director determines that the case is not within the scope of the LASPO Act, there is a further

right of appeal to an Independent Funding Adjudicator (IFA). IFAs can be a solicitor or barrister or Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Legal Executives from private practice. IFAs are members of the Funding and Costs Appeals Review Panel (FCARP). Panel members are not employees of the LAA and act independently. (para 25 – the whole of that section may well be of interest to members)

- All Parliamentary questions and answers are published on Parliament.UK.
- In 2021-22 the LAA received 208 requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act. Of these, 23 related to the functions of the Director of Legal Aid Casework specifically. The majority related to grants of legal aid under ECF, applications in the Immigration and Asylum category of law and the means assessment process.
- Complaints: “the LAA thoroughly investigates every complaint it receives using a two-tier complaints procedure. The initial complaint gives the LAA the chance to review the way the matter was handled at a local level and put the situation right if possible. If a complainant is not content with the initial response, they can escalate their complaint and request a further review. If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the escalated response, they have the right to refer their complaint to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman via their local MP.”
- The number of applications for legal aid in the magistrates’ court decreased by 8% in 2021-22 compared to 2020-21.
- 81,141 applications for legal aid in the Crown Court were received in the same period, down 12% from the previous financial year.
- 114,687 applications for civil representation were received between April 2021 and March 2022.
- 11,776 applications for civil representation supported by evidence of domestic violence or child abuse were received between April 2021 and March 2022, down 1% from the previous year. 10,044 certificates for civil representation were granted in the same period via the domestic violence and child abuse gateway.
- 3,722 Exceptional Case Funding applications were received between April 2021 and March 2022. This is a 12% increase compared to the previous financial year.

LAA updates 10 February 2023



Legal Aid
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We'll come back to some of these in more detail next week, but a quick note that the LAA has issued and/or updated three items on their news page today:

[Civil news: funding rules change affecting SEND Tribunal appeals](#)

Foster parents and approved prospective adoptive parents can apply for means-free funding from 10 February for special educational needs appeals.

[Legal aid: exceptional case funding form and guidance](#)

Exceptional case funding (ECF) form, provider information pack (inquests and non-inquests) and funding guidance.

[Housing Loss Prevention Advice Services \(HLPAS\) and Housing and Debt services from August 2023](#)

Information for organisations interested in delivering Housing Loss Prevention Advice Services and Housing and Debt services.

Fixed Recoverable Costs



The MOJ notified us that “the Government has delayed the introduction of fixed recoverable costs (FRC) in housing cases. The reforms are to be aligned with wider reforms in the housing sector which is why a decision has been taken to delay for a period of two years.”

Well done to HLPAs for their work on this, and to Rupert Hawke and Vicky Ling for their report commissioned by LAPG [here](#) and especially to Paul Seddon (Seddon Costs and Association of Costs Lawyers) who worked on LAPG's behalf with the Civil Justice Council who were looking at this issue. We are trying to find out more information

Tenders Processes – HLPAS, Housing & Debt, HPCDS



HLPAS – Re-tender 12 scheme areas

A tender is now live for applicants wishing to deliver Housing Loss Prevention Advice Services from 1 August 2023 in 12 scheme areas. This procurement process is separate to the one which opened on 17 November and closed at 12pm on 19 December 2022. This procurement process seeks to identify organisations wishing to deliver HLPAS in a small number of areas only, where the LAA did not receive compliant bids through the initial tender process.

Applicants who have already tendered to deliver HLPAS Contract Work do not need to tender through this procurement process unless they wish to bid to deliver HLPAS, and, where relevant, Housing and Debt Contract Work in the areas covered by this procurement process.

The HLPAS areas covered under this process are:

- Bedford
- Birkenhead
- Crewe
- Darlington
- Dartford
- Durham
- High Wycombe
- Hull
- Liverpool
- Teesside
- Telford
- Wigan

The deadline for submitting tenders for this procurement process is **12pm on 1 March 2023**.

The tender pages have been updated on GOV.UK [here](#) and the LAA have also published a news story [here](#).

The LAA says “[w]e’re giving you the chance to tender again for the new Housing Loss Prevention Advice Service in 12 procurement areas without compliant bids”. The fact that the LAA failed to

receive compliant bids in such a high proportion of HLPAS scheme is in our view further evidence of a failure of the civil legal aid scheme. It also mirrors the experiences of the LAA in recent years as it has had to continuously tender and re-tender to fill gaps in the Housing & Debt market and for HPCDS schemes when providers have withdrawn. This is a point that we have repeatedly made to the MOJ and we remain convinced that until the government significantly increases fees and reduces bureaucracy, these schemes, and the Housing & Debt contracts upon which they are built, will continue to fail. This is also true across every area of civil legal aid and needs to be addressed urgently as part of the Review of Civil Legal Aid.

Housing and debt and HPCDS Kingston upon Thames/Richmond upon Thames and Knowsley

This tender opened on 1 February 2023 and closes at 5pm on 2 March 2023. The LAA is inviting tenders to deliver Housing & Debt contract work from 4 April 2023 until 31 August 2024 in the following procurement areas:

1. Kingston upon Thames & Richmond upon Thames
2. Knowsley

HPCDS Southampton and Telford

The LAA is also inviting tenders to deliver services in the following Housing Possession Court Duty Scheme (HPCDS) areas from 30 April 2023 until 31 October 2023:

1. Southampton
2. Telford

The closing date for both of the above tender processes is 5pm, 2nd March 2023

More information on both of these tenders can be found [here](#). And do keep an eye on changes to the information for Applicants on the same page.

And further information for organisations interested in delivering Housing Loss Prevention Advice Services and Housing and Debt services is [here](#).

High Cost Family Cases – LAA

Face to Face session 1st

March 2023



Legal Aid
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The LAA is holding face to face sessions of 20 minutes with an experienced caseworker on 1st March for providers to discuss high cost family cases. Details are [here](#).

Here is what the LAA say:-

“The clinic can only provide guidance and advice on CCMS or CIS case-planning issues. It can't be used to negotiate cases or to answer billing queries.

You should contact High Cost Family Fixer (highcostfamilyfixer@justice.gov.uk) if you think a caseworker has:

- *rejected your case plan incorrectly*
- *reduced your case plan incorrectly*
- *not considered the information provided*
- *asked for documents or information you have provided already*
- *granted the incorrect cost limitation*

You should contact Civil Claim Fix (LAACivilClaimFix@justice.gov.uk) if you think a caseworker has rejected your bill incorrectly.

Urgent CCMS queries can be submitted using a VHCC enquiry in CCMS.

Urgent CIS queries can be emailed to highcostfamily@justice.gov.uk.

CCMS billing queries can be submitted using a billing enquiry in CCMS.

CIS billing queries can be emailed to ContactCivil@justice.gov.uk.

You can also call the Customer Services team on 0300 200 2020.”

The Early Legal Advice Pilot

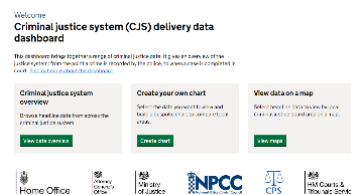


What can we say about the Early Legal Advice Pilot? The official line on the Pilot [can be found here](#). [Our concerns about this Pilot](#) are well-known, and a meeting with the MOJ running this project in December 2022 confirmed that it is not going well. The MOJ has adjusted the terms of the pilot but with two months left to go before it concludes in March 2023 we are seriously concerned that the pilot will not generate the data the MOJ hoped.

Why is this so important? Apart from the fact that the MOJ secured £5m for this project from the Treasury's Shared Outcomes Fund (which is a lot of money to spend for no useful results) the project was also an opportunity for the MOJ to gather data to prove that delivering holistic social welfare services creates better results for clients. Crucially, the MOJ expanded scope for the purposes of the pilot to reintroduce the welfare benefits and debt issues removed by LASPO. This pilot was therefore a chance for providers to deliver joined-up housing, welfare benefits and debt advice, at an early stage in the development of a client's legal problem, in an effort to resolve issues before they escalate. However the pilot has been dogged by delays and poor design from the outset.

We hope that adjustments made to the pilot by the MOJ in January result in at least some useful data being generated during what they have described as this early 'first phase' of the pilot. However, as we understand it the MOJ has no dedicated funding for the next phase(s) so we eagerly await the outcome of an independent evaluation report expected in Summer 2023.

Crime – CJS Delivery Data Dashboard



Wider than legal aid, but possibly of interest to criminal defence practitioners. The Ministry of Justice has published the sixth iteration of the [Criminal Justice System \(CJS\) Delivery Data Dashboard](#).

This dashboard brings together a range of criminal justice data. It gives an overview of the justice system; from the point a crime is recorded by the police, to when a case is completed in court.

The metrics in the dashboard cover three priority areas for the criminal justice system: improving timeliness, increasing victim engagement and improving quality of justice.

[Find out more about the dashboard](#)

Sector News & Events

London Legal Support Trust events

Members will be aware that LLST raises money through legal walks but there are a host of fundraising activities taking place. Here are a few:



[LLST's Abseil Challenge](#), Saturday 22 April - down the ArcelorMittal Orbit in Stratford

[LLST's Skydive Challenge](#), Saturday 8 July

[Spartan Obstacle Course](#), Sunday 30 April (anything that says not for the faint-hearted will rule out some of us...)

[London - Brighton Cycle](#), Sunday 10 September

[There are more HERE](#)

ACL Legal Aid Seminar – 6 March 2023



Our good friends over at the Association of Costs Lawyers are running a legal aid seminar at The Oval in London on Monday, 6 March.

Bookings are now open with places available for all.

Confirmed speakers for the day are:

- Stephen Averill - ACL Vice-Chairman
- Stephen Barker - Finance Technical Lead LAA
- David Crawford - Senior Caseworker Finance Team LAA – Reg 5a Judicial Review discretion applications
- Chris Needham - Senior Caseworker Finance Team LAA – topic tbc
- Louise Cowell - Operational Lead LAA High Cost Family Team accompanied by John Chapman, Tom Colquitt and Daniel Good
- Jamie Butt - Contract Manager & Civil Bill Reject Lead LAA

Additional speakers will be added as confirmed and all speakers may be subject to change.

[Further details and booking process here](#)

Please note that LAPG members pay the same rate for this event as ACL members, which comes in at a very reasonable £185 for the day. Trainee solicitors and pupil barristers also pay the same rate as students of £140.

Justice First Fellowship – recruitment round for hosts announced



The Legal Education Foundation has announced the launch of the JFF host recruitment round. What does this mean? If you want to take on a Justice First Fellow you can apply to be a host. Both you and the appointed person will receive financial and practical support.

Through the JFF scheme, TLEF can fund:

1. Staff costs
2. Direct costs such as travel, subsistence or events
3. Overheads (they encourage organisations to include a reasonable overhead contribution)
4. Small capital items such as IT equipment
5. Training costs and examination costs (only the PSC or those mandatory for SQE2)

The closing date for applications is Tuesday 21 February 2023.

Public Law Project events



Public
Law
Project

Legal Research for social impact

This hybrid event takes place on 17 May 2023.

Civil society, Universities and Government all want research that has impact. This event is for anyone wanting to commission, develop or collaborate on legal research resulting in positive change to people's lives by influencing law, policy and practice.

If your organisation has very limited resources and you want to attend we can subsidise tickets. Please e-mail events@publiclawproject.org.uk to discuss.

Who this event is for:

- Legal researchers or those commissioning research working towards social change at NGOs and Universities.
- Policy professionals, campaigners and lawyers using research to inform action.

As delegates you will learn:

- What the impact agenda is and why it matters to researchers, lawyers, civil society, and Government
- To define and measure impact in the context of legal research
- How to collaborate to build relationships, projects and co-produce impactful research
- What support is available for impactful research, from universities and funders, and how organisations might access this
- Discuss perceptions of failure in impact

Our very own Head of Parliamentary Affairs, Ro Teather, joins the event as a speaker in the afternoon seminar discussion on the way research and case studies can be used to communicate with Members of Parliament and impact on their work and policy more broadly.

[Further information here](#)

Fairness in Welfare Benefits

PLP is offering six online training seminars to help

you get fair treatment for your clients, by effectively challenging unfair or discriminatory practices, especially those that reduce people's benefits below subsistence levels. The course also looks at improvements to make the benefits system fairer, and adoption of the S.1 Equality Duty, both statutory (in Scotland and Wales) and voluntary (by English local authorities).

Who this training is for:

- Advisers and lawyers working with those on benefits
- Civil society campaigners, community groups and policy people working to change Government benefit practices which are unfair or, ultimately, unlawful
- Researchers looking at benefits practices and the way these impact on claimant's lives

[Further information and booking here](#)

LAPG News and Events



Renewing your 2023 LAPG Membership – renew now for a 10% discount

We have now commenced the 2023 membership renewal process and are pleased that so many organisations have already chosen to renew their subscription for next year. Your support ensures that we can maintain a strong and independent voice to advocate for legal aid practitioners and access to justice at the highest levels of political influencing and push for operational improvements to the legal aid scheme with the LAA.

LAPG Membership runs from January to December and the renewal process this year once again see fees frozen as we recognise just how difficult it is to run your organisations. The usual 10% Early Bird reduction is also in place if you renew prior to 31 March 2023.

Number of fee earners	Early Bird Fee	Standard Fee
1 – 5 fee earners	£157.50	£175.00
6 – 10 fee earners	£238.50	£265.00
11 – 20 fee earners	£342.00	£380.00
21 – 30 fee earners	£468.00	£520.00

31 – 50 fee earners	£544.50	£605.00
51+ fee earners	£630.00	£700.00
Non-contract holding rate	£283.50	£315.00

This year we have introduced to online forms to complete to renew your membership – one for paying by BACS and one to pay direct via our website. [Visit the Membership page of our website for more information.](#)

If you have any queries about LAPG membership or the renewal process, please contact our ever-helpful Operations Officer, [Anna Neira Quesada](#).

Thank you once again for being members of LAPG. Your support is very much appreciated.

LAPG Training Courses

Supervision Courses



We have confirmed the dates for our 2023 training programme, with Supervision Courses scheduled for 18th January, 6th March, 17th May, 12th July, 26th September and 22nd November. Our January Course is now fully booked but you can book your place on any of the remaining 2023 training dates below:

[6TH MARCH 2023](#)

[17TH MAY 2023](#)

[12TH JULY 2023](#)

[26TH SEPTEMBER 2023](#)

[22ND NOVEMBER 2023](#)

Designed for new LAA Supervisors or those wishing to refresh their supervisory skills, our course helps you meet a key component in securing and then effectively operating your legal aid contract and meeting the LAA's supervisor standards. We again welcome Matt Howgate and Vicky Ling as our tutors for this course. You will receive practical help filling out supervisor forms, learn how to conduct file reviews and how to keep up to date with LAA changes.

LAPG members receive a £40 discount on the course fee, bringing it down from £250 to £210 for the day. Book multiple delegates from your organisation and receive an additional 10% discount.

We have reformatted the course so that we are

covering all of the same content across one day rather than two days. The content in this course is relevant for both crime and civil practitioners.

If you would like to know more about this course, or to reserve your place, contact [Andrea Shumaker](#).

Online Introduction to Civil Legal Aid Course

The Civil Legal Aid scheme is incredibly complex and the consequences of getting something wrong can be damaging to a client's case or financially damaging to the organisation doing the work – sometimes both. We have therefore developed the first module in a series which provides a general introduction to the civil legal aid scheme aimed at trainees, paralegals, junior lawyers and those that wish to refresh their knowledge having worked in the sector for some time.

We have moved this online module onto a new training platform, Thinkific! This new platform allows for growth and development of the course and a better overall experience for the user. The same information is covered and it is still entirely self-paced, you will still receive access to the course for 12 months.

We now offer this course in written and video versions! Once you are enrolled on the course you will have the option to read through the material yourself or watch a video! You can mix and match how you learn to complete the course in a way that best suits your learning style and time constraints. All the video and written content are available on the Thinkific platform and you will have full access to both versions.

If you would like to subscribe for just £99 please click [here](#). If you have any issues or require an invoice please email [Andrea Shumaker](#). We offer three discount codes, JFF, for Justice First Fellows, JFFO, for Just First Fellowship Host Organisation employees, and multiple-tickets, to be used when subscribing more than one participant on the course.

Online Introduction to Management Course

We are currently working on a new and exciting training course, an online module similar to our Introduction to Civil Legal Aid Course, all about management. This course will offer an introductory look into management and will be entirely self-paced!

We are soft launching this course shortly and it will be made widely available in the coming months! If you are interested in partaking or getting more information please contact [Thomas Rigard-Asquith](#).

The 2023 Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year awards



A quick update on this year's LALY awards. We are still aiming to launch the nomination process during the week commencing 27 February 2023. Nominations will open for 8 weeks and we can now confirm that the ceremony will take place in central London on **12 July 2023**. We're getting very excited!

Watch this space and follow [@LALYawards](#) for news!

Is this week's Update a little tetchy? Perhaps. But when the MOJ publishes terms of reference for a review of civil legal aid, just a couple of months shy of the 10th anniversary of the implementation of one of the worst pieces of legislation in history, and doesn't mention the need to increase fees, I think I am entitled to be a little tetchy. Needless to say that talk in the LAPG office has involved a great deal of debate about not how we are going to respond to the Review, but whether should refuse to respond to the Review. Until the government publicly acknowledges the damage it has done to legal aid, those trying to deliver legal aid, and the thousands upon thousands of clients who have been excluded from help in the last decade, then I can imagine that many practitioners will simply ignore this Review process. I wonder how many have also decided not to extend their contracts this year, or bid for new contracts, because of how limp this Review appears to be? We are continuing to fight for a wider review, and a specific focus on fees, because that is the fundamental problem with civil legal aid that the government must address.

Take care one and all,

Chris Minnoch, CEO [@ChrisLAPG](#)

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10/02/23



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

LEGAL AID LAWYER OF THE YEAR AWARDS



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