



PRESS RELEASE - TUESDAY 24 FEBRUARY 2026

## **Nominations for the 2026 Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year awards are now open!**

**Winners in 10 award categories will be announced 3 July; deadline for entries 21 April.**

Legal Aid Practitioners Group is proud to announce the launch of the 24th annual Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year awards, the only event dedicated solely to celebrating the social justice legal community.

As well as awards covering all areas of legal aid practice (see full list of categories below), once again this year, the LALYs will recognise the essential but often unseen work of support staff, who do so much to keep the wheels of justice turning.

### **LAPG CEO Chris Minnoch says:**

*'Support staff have long been the backbone of the legal aid sector. However, the chaos caused by the Legal Aid Agency's catastrophic 2025 data breach - which led to suspension of all of its online systems for more than six months - presented unprecedented challenges. Without the tireless efforts of non-fee-earners, many providers would not have weathered the crisis. Now that things have started to return to normal, it is the perfect time for organisations to recognise the individuals and teams who did so much to keep the justice system afloat by making a nomination in the Legal Aid Support Staffer/Support Team award.'*

The LALY awards are non-profit-making and only made possible due to the generosity of our sponsors and supporters (see below).

A highlight of the evening is always our Legal Aid Newcomer award which will be sponsored by Friends of LALY26. Those who want to show their solidarity with newer entrants can donate to our crowdfunding campaign (donations



from £10), in return for seeing their name printed in the ceremony programme and shown on stage on the night.

### **LALY26 award categories**

1. Legal Aid Newcomer
2. Legal Aid Support Staffer/Support Team
3. Family Legal Aid including Children's Rights
4. Criminal Legal Aid
5. Legal Aid Barrister
6. Legal Aid Firm/Not-for-Profit Agency
7. Housing Law
8. Social Welfare Law
9. Public Law
10. Outstanding achievement (we do not accept nominations in this category)

### **Supporters and Sponsors**

- Friends of LALY26
- Accesspoint
- Resolution
- DG Legal
- The Bar Council
- The Law Society
- Garden Court Chambers
- Doughty Street Chambers
- One Pump Court
- Matrix
- 39 Essex Chambers
- LEF
- Miles & Partners
- 4PB

Nominate here: [lapg.co.uk/laly-nomination](https://lapg.co.uk/laly-nomination)

Donate to become a Friend of LALY26 here: [lapg.co.uk/laly-crowdfunding](https://lapg.co.uk/laly-crowdfunding)

Buy tickets for the ceremony on 3 July here: [lapg.co.uk/laly-tickets](https://lapg.co.uk/laly-tickets)

For further information, visit the [LALY pages of LAPG's website](#)

Or contact co-organisers Fiona Bawdon ([fiona.bawdon@gmail.com](mailto:fiona.bawdon@gmail.com)) or Chris Minnoch ([chris.minnoch@lapg.co.uk](mailto:chris.minnoch@lapg.co.uk))