

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Welcome to the December edition of the Sussex Law Society newsletter. As usual it is full of news and useful information and this month it also includes a Christmas bonus item of excellent wine tips from Professor Dominic Regan – so make sure you scroll right down to the bottom!

It has been a busy start to my presidency. My first engagement provided me with the honour of attending the East Sussex High Sheriff's Judges' Service. The event is held to mark the start of the judicial year and it was a pleasure to meet all those who help to administer justice. There are more details of the event as well as photographs [here](#).

Later in November, I was invited to attend the Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge & District Law Society's annual dinner. I am grateful to their President, Joanna Pratt, for her kind invitation and thank her and their members for organising a very enjoyable evening (see photo below).

More recently, I and other members of the Committee attended a Local Law Society Townhall meeting where we heard about the Law Society's Business Plan for 2024/25 and about their plans to celebrate the Bicentenary year.

As you will recall from my first update to you, one of my focusses for my term is to promote the support, training and development of junior lawyers. I attended the Sussex Junior Lawyers Division's AGM and spoke with their new committee about their plans for the year ahead. I have also held meetings with the local Universities to talk about the careers advice that is offered to their law students and, in particular, the relatively new Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE).

We are almost at the end of another busy year, and I would like to wish you all a very happy Christmas which I hope will provide the opportunity for some relaxation before we begin 2025.

*Daniel Dickson*



## NEWS

- Huge congratulations to our Immediate Past President, **Manjinder Nagra**, who won the Company & Commercial Lawyer of the Year 2024 award at the recent Asian Legal Awards,

the premier legal awards ceremony championing and celebrating legal excellence in the Asian community. We are very proud to have a past President win such an honour. Well deserved Manjinder!

- **Westgate Chambers** are delighted to welcome two new tenants to Chambers Family Team. **Elissa Da Costa-Waldman** and **Neive Augustin** will both join Chambers as full tenants from 6 January 2025 and 16 December 2024, respectively. Elissa and Neive specialise in Family Law and will both be at Chambers client party at the i360 on Friday 13th December, to welcome our guests. We look forward to seeing you there.
- **Westgate Chambers** are delighted to announce that its stellar clerking team are now an award-winning clerking team having won, Clerking Team of the Year 2024, at the LexisNexis Family Law Awards. Our Congratulations to Sean, Stuart, Adam, Paul and Laura.
- **Tisshaws Solicitors** are delighted to have won the Professional Services Award at the prestigious Sussex Business Awards 2024, at a glittering event held at Brighton's Grand Hotel last week. Also celebrating was past President of the Sussex Law Society, **Dean Orgill** of **Mayo Wynne Baxter** who won the Business Person of the Year Award. The firm are also delighted to announce that **Yasmin Gizzi** has joined as an Associate Solicitor. A collaborative lawyer, Yasmin deals with all aspects of family law from divorce and finances to children matters

#### DISTRICT JUDGE VACANCY

The Judicial Appointments Commission is currently accepting applications for the role of District Judge, with applications closing on Tuesday 17 December. [See here](#) for details of the role and how to apply.

#### ATTENTION ALL FRC PRACTITIONERS IN KENT, SURREY & SUSSEX

HHJ Stuart Farquhar, Lead Judge for the Financial Remedies Court in Kent, Surrey and Sussex, has raised a number of points below for FRC practitioners in Kent, Surrey & Sussex:

- **The Portal** - I would not say that the FRC portal is perfect, but it has improved and 'Case File View' certainly makes it easier to navigate. There are many cases where all of the documents are uploaded correctly and are all easy to find, but that is not always the case. The Portal is, in essence, the Court File. If a document is not uploaded to the portal, then it has not been 'filed' – it is vital that this occurs for every document. You can access the general guidance [here](#).
- **Orders** - These must be uploaded correctly as is set out in [the guidance](#). If orders are not uploaded in this manner, then Judges are simply not able to approve them as they are not recognised as orders on the system. Please discuss with the judge whether they would wish you to email them the draft order for them to approve before it is uploaded. Whenever you do upload it, please inform the judge by email in order to prompt them to visit the portal to formally approve the order.

- **Counsel** - Ensure counsel is provided with access to the portal to permit any position statement to be uploaded – the portal should be the only place that the judge has to look for all of the information on a case.
- **Labelling** - Please follow the labelling guidance so that documents are easily found.
- **Bundles** - Often these have been placed in Case Documents – please ensure that they are in the Bundle tab.
- **Kent** - Since HHJ Robinson retired, I am the Circuit Judge that deals with all Kent appeals and complex cases. If any Kent practitioners have issues, they are free to [contact myself](#).
- **NCDR** - There has been a significant shift in recent years, which is now supported by the more recent rule change. It is important that we do not just pay lip service to the use of NCDR – please ensure that you pursue NCDR routes in every case.
- **Your Contact Details** - I built up a list of FRC practitioners in 2019 when I became the lead judge for Kent Surrey and Sussex. It needs to be updated. Does anyone know how I can obtain an up-to-date list of practitioners?
- **Separate Counties** - It is a long way from Guildford to Canterbury (79 miles) – I know as I sit in both venues. The reality is that Canterbury practitioners will rarely meet Guildford practitioners. I would wish to commence twice yearly Teams Court User meetings and it makes more sense to do them on a County by County basis. If I can create an updated list, does anyone have any ideas how I could separate these into separate Counties?

Please let me know how updated lists can be obtained. If anyone has any general issues on FRC matters, they should [contact me](#).

#### CIVIL JUSTICE COUNCIL PHASE TWO REPORT ON PRE-ACTION PROTOCOLS

The Civil Justice Council has published its Phase Two Report on Pre-Action Protocols. You can read the report [here](#). Sir Geoffrey Vos, Master of the Rolls, Head of Civil Justice and Chair of the CJC, said: “I welcome the publication of the CJC’s Phase Two Report on Pre-Action Protocols. Pre-action protocols are vital to facilitating fair and proportionate dispute resolution. This second phase of work provides important recommendations about specific subject-area protocols. I very much hope that their implementation will be prioritised. I am grateful to Professor Andrew Higgins and the working group for their work in concluding this comprehensive review.”

#### BOOK YOUR ADMISSION CEREMONY AT THE LAW SOCIETY IN ITS BICENTENARY YEAR

Celebrate your success on qualifying to become a solicitor and mark the occasion with friends and family. Whether you qualified recently or are already established, it’s never too late to celebrate your success at an admissions ceremony. Mark 200 years of the Law Society and attend an admission ceremony in 2025, its bicentenary year. As part of the celebrations, you will receive a bespoke bicentenary themed admission certificate and will have access to exclusive bicentennial merchandise. See [here](#) for more information and to book a ceremony.

#### MONEY ADVICE PLUS IS LOOKING FOR NEW TRUSTEES TO JOIN THE BOARD

Money Advice Plus is an award-winning charity, based in Hove and Eastbourne. We specialise in debt and money advice. Our vision is for everyone to have the advice and support they need to manage their own money effectively. We do this by providing person-centred money advice, actively engaging with those who find it most difficult, improving wellbeing and financial resilience. Some of

you may have met our team on the Brighton & Hove Legal Walks. We are lucky to be one of the charity recipients of money raised by the walk. <https://www.moneyadviceplus.org.uk/>

We are especially interested in hearing from candidates with HR and legal experience: People with skills and experience (including lived experience) who will help us maintain our reputation for being a well-run charity. We welcome people from underrepresented sections of the community, including younger people. Our Trustees contribute to our vision and we couldn't operate without their support, expertise and input. A recent speech by the head of the Charity Commission recognised Trustees as the 'driving force in charities, whose work is often unseen, taking place behind-the-scenes of charities' front-line work.'

This is an opportunity to not only put something back into the community but to be part of a friendly and supportive team. If you are interested in finding out more about this rewarding voluntary role, please contact [tracie.church@moneyadviceplus.org.uk](mailto:tracie.church@moneyadviceplus.org.uk)

### AN INTRODUCTION TO AI FOR LAW FIRMS

In this engaging and interactive webinar, discover how AI is transforming the legal profession and what it means for your firm. Geoff Davies will explore how AI can streamline legal tasks, such as research and contract review, while providing hands-on insights without requiring technical expertise. He will also discuss essential regulatory guidance, covering the SRA's recommendations and aligning with the UK Government's Responsible AI White Paper, helping you understand how to develop sound AI policies within your firm. This session is ideal for law firms beginning their AI journey, providing actionable steps to ensure compliance, security, and responsible AI use. You will learn:

- Where AI will—and won't—add value to your legal practice
- Ensuring GDPR compliance and protecting client confidentiality when using AI
- Methods for transcribing meetings and client calls automatically, creating reliable file notes
- Using AI agents to draft contracts automatically based on case documents or prepare reports for clients
- Leveraging Generative AI for accurate legal research

The webinar is £30 + VAT for members and £40 + VAT for non-members and takes place from 12 – 1.30 on Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> January 2025. [The application form can be found here.](#)

### COUNCIL MEMBER'S REPORT

The Law Society Council meets for the final time this year on 11<sup>th</sup> December, just too late for the Newsletter deadline and I shall report to the SLS on that meeting in January.

2025 is the 200-year anniversary of the Law Society of England and Wales. Events are being held around the country to mark this milestone and on Tuesday 8th July 2025 there will be a lunchtime event in Brighton. To register your interest please go to the Law Society Website at [Bicentenary year | The Law Society](#).

I wish everyone a happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.

*Andrew Bishop*  
*Law Society Council Member for Sussex*  
[Andrew.bishop@bishopandlight.co.uk](mailto:Andrew.bishop@bishopandlight.co.uk)

**AN ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM**

A year which began so bullishly for the SRA concludes with it now being hauled to task by the oversight legal regulator with yet to be determined and unprecedented "Enforcement Action". This follows the eventual publication of the independent Review which the LSB commissioned into the SRA's intervention into Axiom Ince nearly a year ago and which the legal press echoes in unison has had disastrous consequences on consumer confidence and professional respect, not least with the "black hole" being restored by a necessary levy on the Compensation Fund. From having a pop at regulating Legal Executives, potentially unlawful proposals as to the Jurisdiction of the SDT, outrageously disproportionate and inconsistent fines, ill-conceived "prosecutions", adverse costs Orders, .....it's now (it appears still not entirely unrepented!) time for humility and learning lessons. Keep watching these pages and as you have done, do please continue to bring to our attention any personal event which we might be able to refer or try to assist with. Finally, and to be as fair as possible, legal commentators seem to agree that no such universal critique is deserved by the SRA with regard to the Government driven AML checks. We have a common interest to get our house in order.

Happy Christmas and a hassle free New Year.

*Pat Richards*

*Compliance & Regulatory Affairs Committee*

**FAKE NEWS AND THE ETHICS OF ONLINE REVIEWS: THE DANGER OF THE DISGRUNTLED**

Since the 'Fake News' uproar of 2016, the reliability of information on the internet deteriorated drastically. Considering this, it is unsurprising to discover there is an abundance of unfair, inaccurate, or untrue reviews online. This is because online reviews tend to reside on sites that are widely unregulated. This can cause frustration for legal clients, as they try to turn to online resources to find a trustworthy law firm. They can't be sure which reviews are genuine. They might think they've found the perfect law firm for their needs, until they stumble across a terrible review... but what if it can't be trusted? With no context and no regulation of these reviews, which side should the uninformed client take? [Read the full article](#) by Sussex Law Society main sponsors [reviewsolicitors](#).

**THE ROLE OF LAW FIRMS IN ADVANCING SUSTAINABILITY: FROM YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT TO NAVIGATING COMPLIANCE, GREENWASHING & REPORTING TO CLIENTS**

As the pressure to address climate change intensifies, law firms are increasingly recognising the strategic importance of measuring and reducing their carbon footprints. Several factors are driving this shift:

- Evolving regulatory requirements, in the UK and the EU. Examples such as ESOS, SECR, CBAM, and MEEs regulations, with many more in consultation.
- Client expectations for greener practices – whether with corporate clients and the public sector which could be mandatory, or with discretionary pressure from private clients.
- A desire to strengthen the firm's brand and differentiate, or in response to competitive pressure from others in the sector who have taken a lead.
- Recognising that when reducing carbon, firms can also save money.
- Attracting new talent, especially younger staff, outside of London.

- The need to address emerging risks, particularly if the practice advises on the same.
- 

In response, some law firms have implemented strategies to reduce their environmental impact, with a particular focus on encouraging behavioural change within their organisations, especially where waste or outdated practice adds both increased carbon and operational costs.

You can read more of this interesting and increasingly relevant article by Guy Longmore [here](#). Guy is also presenting a webinar for the Sussex Law Society on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2025 from 12 noon – 1pm ‘**Carbon & Net Zero in the Legal Sector. The risks and opportunities of de-carbonisation for law firms**’ which is FREE for members and £15 + VAT for non-members. You can find the details and application form [here](#).

#### LAWCARE’S ‘LIFE IN THE LAW’ 2025 LAUNCH EVENT

[LawCare](#), the mental health charity for the legal sector, is thrilled to announce the launch of the Life in the Law 2025 surveys on 15 January 2025 and invites you to join their free launch event. It’s your chance to learn how you can be part of important research that will shape the future of mental health and wellbeing in the legal sector. The event will include Dr Emma Jones, Life in the Law 2025’s lead researcher from the University of Sheffield, Prof Richard Collier from Newcastle University, who contributed to the 2021 survey and members of the LawCare team. Everyone is welcome to join the event. [Book your place here](#).

#### SUSSEX COMMUNITY FOUNDATION PUBLISHES REPORT ON REACHING POTENTIAL

The new Reaching Potential report explores education and employment challenges in Sussex, revealing how important the role of the charity sector is across the county. The report highlights, amongst other issues, fewer job opportunities and difficult access to jobs for many Sussex communities due to poor transport links and a lack of large urban centres. Education attainment levels are also a concern with lower achievement rates compared to the South East and England.

Sussex Community Foundation partners with local businesses, families and individuals who want to give back and support local causes. This year alone they have given out over £900,000 in grants to small charities and voluntary groups across Sussex.

To find out more, [download the full Reaching Potential report here](#) or contact the team at 01273 490 440 or [info@sussexcommunityfoundation.org](mailto:info@sussexcommunityfoundation.org)

#### SUSSEX LAW SOCIETY WEBINARS AND COURSES

Click on the links below for more details about these webinars and the application forms:

12<sup>th</sup> December 2024 – ‘[Adverse Possession & Other Boundary Issues](#)’. 12noon – 1pm. Live webinar by Richard Snape.

14<sup>th</sup> January 2025 – ‘[An Introduction to AI for Law Firms](#)’. 12 noon – 1.30pm. Live Webinar by Geoff Davis

14<sup>th</sup> January 2025 – ‘[Restrictive & Positive Covenants in Freehold Land](#)’ 2pm – 5pm. Live webinar by Richard Snape

16<sup>th</sup> January 2025 – ‘[Carbon & Net Zero in the Legal Sector. The Risks and Opportunities of De-Carbonisation for Law Firms](#)’ 12.00 – 13.00. Live webinar by Guy Longmore.

21<sup>st</sup> January 2025 – ‘[Complaints- How to handle them well!](#)’. 10am – 11.30am. Live webinar by Joanna Morris.

5<sup>th</sup> February 2025 – ‘Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Training’. 10am – 11.30 am. Live webinar by Joanna Morris

3<sup>rd</sup> April 2025 – ‘Spring Civil Litigation Update’. 9.30am – 12.30am. Live webinar by Dominic Regan.

29<sup>th</sup> April 2025 – ‘AML Update’. 10am – 1pm. Live webinar by Joanna Morris

## OTHER COURSES/WEBINARS/ARTICLES/RESOURCES

### Webinars

Throughout January 2025, Martin Searle Solicitors are running **#MeToo Matters, their campaign to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace**. They are offering a free 30-minute telephone advice line that will help employees understand their rights around sexual harassment and provide advice to employers on creating a working environment where all employees feel safe and are supported by their employer. They are running a virtual seminar for employers in the charity and non-profit sector on ‘**Preventing Sexual Harassment At Work – What Employers Need To Know**’ on Thursday 23 January 2025. They are also running a free virtual workshop for employee advisers and trade union representatives - ‘**Sexual Harassment at Work – How to Support Employees Bringing and Defending Allegations**’ on Thursday 30 January 2025. For more details [click here](#).

### Articles/Blogs

PFAS Major Pollution Concerns - Headlines that shout ‘Residents told to wash and peel homegrown vegetables before eating’ are going to cause concern. And when it signals the potential for a new Part 2A site it is worth taking note and understanding the origin of the headlines. In this blog, we explore the site’s history that has led to serious contamination by the “Forever Chemicals” PFAS. <https://www.groundsure.com/pfas-major-pollution-concerns/>

<https://orionlegalmarketing.co.uk/barrister-marketing-consultant/>

<https://becket-chambers.co.uk/articles/gh-v-gh-2024-ewfc-2547-the-value-of-fdrs/>

<https://becket-chambers.co.uk/articles/hair-strand-testing-treat-the-expert-as-an-expert/>

## SITUATIONS VACANT

Listing job vacancies in the Newsletter & putting more detailed vacancies on the [website](#) is FREE for Sussex Law Society member firms and individual members and £100 + VAT for other contributors. Contact [Jeanette Lacy Scott](#) to place an advert. More details about each vacancy and how to apply can be found by following the highlighted links.

- **Experience Employment Lawyer** - Martin Searle Solicitors are looking to recruit someone to join their Employment Law team. For a full job description and to apply, please [click here](#).
- **Family Lawyer** – Tishhaws Solicitors are looking for a family lawyer (4 – 8 years qualified) to join a growing and valued team in Haywards Heath (full-time or 4 days a week position). We are a progressive dispute resolution focused award-winning firm. We encourage and support our team members with mediation and collaborative law training. Competitive salary and bonuses. We welcome enquiries from everyone and value diversity in our

workforce. Please e-mail [gilva.tisshaw@tisshawssolicitors.co.uk](mailto:gilva.tisshaw@tisshawssolicitors.co.uk) with CV. If you would like a preliminary chat about the position, please ring Gilva on 01444 472702.

- **Private Client Assistant** - Christmas and Company Solicitors in Lewes are currently looking for an experienced Private Client Assistant to join us on a full/part time basis. You must be experienced in the preparation/drafting of Wills, Lasting Powers of Attorney and Estate Administration including completion of IHT forms. For more information about the role see [here](#).
- **Private Client Solicitor or Legal Executive** - E J Moyle LLP are looking to recruit a qualified Private Client Solicitor or Legal Executive to work alongside our Private Client Team. The ideal candidate will possess strong IT and communication skills and have experience in preparing Wills, Powers of Attorney, Probate and Administration of Estates. We are looking for someone who is 1 year + qualified for this full or part time role. The salary is competitive plus benefits. If you are interested in applying, please send your CV to Linda Robinson [lrobinson@moyle.co.uk](mailto:lrobinson@moyle.co.uk)

## LOCUMS

If you would like to be added to the list of locums published monthly in this Newsletter, please email your details to [Jeanette Lacy Scott](mailto:Jeanette.Lacy.Scott). Listing your details here is free of charge for members:

- Margaret Dowdles - commercial/residential property. Happy to discuss how firms can practically work together so she can innovate on pricing and still deliver real value at this challenging time and going forwards -Contact [mgtldles@gmail.com](mailto:mgtldles@gmail.com) 07947-771593. Charges realistic rates.
- Patrick Richards- Un-Notarised legal translations, office and Court interpreter services offered by fluent French and Italian speaking local Solicitor. Contact [patrickrichards27@hotmail.com](mailto:patrickrichards27@hotmail.com) 07715928563.
- Patrick Rusk – Patrick Rusk – Legal Translation Services – Trainee Solicitor and Member of Chartered Institute of Linguists (CIOL no. 55485) offering legal translation services from German, French and Spanish into English. For all enquiries, please email [patrick.rusk@hotmail.com](mailto:patrick.rusk@hotmail.com) or text +44 7534 747667.

## LOST & MISSING WILLS

Graham John BOWLES (RIP 13/10/2024) D.O.B 2/9/1955 Last address: Flat 12, Chester Court, 30 Davigdor Road, Hove BN3 1RB. Any Information to [Jessica.cole@thompsonallen.co.uk](mailto:Jessica.cole@thompsonallen.co.uk)

All wills previously held by Howlett Clarke are now safely held with the Right Legal Group, Wyvern Business Park, 16 Stanier Way, Derby, DE21 6BF. Telephone number 01332 424511.

Please contact [Jeanette Lacy Scott](mailto:Jeanette.Lacy.Scott) if you are looking for a will or if you want to be part of our lost/missing wills scheme (free of charge for members)

## SUSSEX LAW SOCIETY GOLF SOCIETY

The Sussex Law Society Golf Society is open to anyone with connections with the legal profession, whether you are in practice or retired, whatever your standard of play. There is no joining fee. If you have not played with us before, why not give us a try.



Bob Mayfield - Secretary, SLSGS  
[Bobmayfield111@googlemail.com](mailto:Bobmayfield111@googlemail.com)

### DOMINIC REGAN'S CHRISTMAS WINE TIPS

With thanks to Frenkel Topping who commissioned Dominic to come up with these suggestions and to Dominic for kindly sharing with us!

“Good wine need not be expensive but expensive wine must be good. The following are all highly recommended yet inexpensive for what they are:

#### Reds

Tesco is strong on Côtes du Rhône wine. If ever stuck for a reliable red, I always suggest this French gem. The £5-50 version is a steal, whilst the £11 Chapoutier note (the braille label) is magnificent. The latter would be perfect on Christmas Day.

Spanish Rioja is another favourite. A good one has a gentle hint of vanilla and subtle spice in the flavour. Tesco again has 2017 Vina del Cura for £13, but infinitely better for £2 more is 2019 Marques De Riscal, the best I have had in 4 years.

Pinot Noir is a gentle grape and it works with both fish and white meat. Great value bottles are widely available. Look out for it made in Tasmania, Germany and Romania.

A good Beaujolais is a good food wine; buy Brouilly if you can.

#### Sparkling Wines

Bird In Hand is a sparkling Red Shiraz which sounds weird but isn't.

If you want a Champagne like experience which isn't pricey, then seek out Blanquettes de Limoux which I have seen in the last week at Aldi and Tesco for a tenner. Sparkling wine labelled Champagne must have been produced in that area east of Paris. Great sparkling wine is made elsewhere in France such as Crémant de Bourgogne from Burgundy.

Decent Champagne can be bought at a fair price. Piper Heidsieck (red labelled) is delicious and costs much less than the heavily advertised brands like Moët. Tesco Finest keeps winning awards at £25 a bottle. This year Aldi has a vintage for £21-99 which has also been lauded.

Vintage Spanish sparkling Cava is easily found and should be £10 tops.

#### Whites

French White from Burgundy is it. Aldi has Mâcon -villages for under £9, the best price out there. Macon is a reliable Chardonnay.

South African Chardonnay is widely available and enjoyable by itself or with food.

Lidl and Tesco have Sauvignon Blanc from around the globe. New Zealand is a prime producer.

#### Strategy

All retailers have deals up to New Year so buy if you can. I guarantee prices will increase in 2025!

### LAW SOCIETY DIVISIONS/NETWORKS

The Law Society has some really useful divisions/networks full of information and resources which are worth exploring. The links are here: [Ethnic Minority Lawyers](#); [In-house Lawyers](#); [Junior Lawyers](#); [Lawyers with Disabilities](#); [LGBT+ Lawyers](#); [Small Firms](#); [Solicitor Judges](#); [Women Lawyers](#) a

## **SUBSCRIBE/UNSUBSCRIBE**

Following the introduction of the new GDPR laws on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018, if you are not an individual or corporate member of the Sussex Law Society and wish to continue to receive this monthly newsletter you will need to [opt in here](#). If you are unsure about whether you are/are not a member, please contact [Jeanette Lacy Scott](#)

If you would like to receive information about courses and events in any of the following areas of law, please sign up to one of the following lists:

[Litigators List](#)

[Private Client Practitioners List](#)

[Property Practitioners List](#)

[Family Practitioners List](#)

[Criminal Law Practitioners List](#)

Contact [Jeanette Lacy Scott](#) if you no longer wish to receive the monthly Newsletter and put **UNSUBSCRIBE** in the subject heading.