



Welcome

Hello and welcome to the Relationship Management monthly report for August 2016 for the North.

We hope you like our refreshed look with features, graphics and photos. We would like to know what you think and whether you would like to be featured in the newsletter. If you have any comments, please complete our quick [survey](#).

This month the focus is very much on the SRA Handbook consultation and we have organised events in the region with Catherine Dixon to involve you in this important issue. We also have a profile on Robert Bourns the new Law Society President, dates for the 2017 Presidents and Secretaries Conference, and as a result of your feedback some practical help on what the Society can do to help with the growing problem of cyber security.

We hope you find the report useful and we would ask that you share it with your members and colleagues, put it on your websites and tweet about it.

Thank you for reading.

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You can also follow us on Twitter
[@lawsocNorthWest](#)
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Apprenticeships in law briefing – what law firms need to know

The Law Society, London 27 September, 10:30 - 13:00

This event is designed for any legal employers – both law firms and in-house departments - with an interest in learning more about apprenticeships in law.

[Find out more and book your place](#)

Events in the North

Criminal Legal Aid Roadshow

17 August 5- 7.30pm in Newcastle venue tbc

Criminal Legal Aid Roadshow

18 August 5 - 7.30pm in Manchester venue tbc

SRA Handbook Consultation discussion in Manchester with Catherine Dixon Chief Executive of The Law Society

24 August at 3pm

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel, 1 Piccadilly Place, Manchester, M1

Please register your attendance here [SRA Handbook Manchester](#)

SRA Handbook Consultation discussion in Leeds with Catherine Dixon Chief Executive of The Law Society

25 August at 3pm

At the Queens Hotel, City Square, Leeds, LS1 1PJ

Please register your attendance here [Leeds SRA Handbook](#)

Association of North West Law Societies (ANWLS) Dinner

19 September at Farington Lodge Leyland 6pm for dinner at 6.30pm

If you would like to attend please contact Cath Carter Catherine.carter@lawsociety.org.uk

Regulatory update seminar

21 September Manchester venue TBC

Private Client Session - updates in practice

22 September at University of Law Manchester

Family section - regional seminar

5 October Leeds venue TBC

Small firms annual conference

6 October Park Plaza Leeds

For a full list of events, further detail and to book, please visit our [events page](#).



Solicitors Regulation Authority's Looking to the Future consultation - Law Society briefing

The Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) published its, Looking to the Future, consultation on 1 June. The deadline for responses is 21 September 2016.

The Law Society has produced a briefing designed to help members consider the implications of the proposed changes. The briefing is available on [the Law Society website](#).

Over the summer, we will be conducting a wide-ranging dialogue with members through events, briefings and discussions with local law societies, to gather opinions and evidence about the possible impact of these proposals.

In the North these will be held on
24 August at 3pm in Manchester at
DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel, 1 Piccadilly Place, Manchester, M1

Please register your attendance here [SRA Handbook Manchester](#)

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25 August at 3pm in Leeds

At the Queens Hotel, City Square, Leeds, LS1 1PJ

Please register your attendance here [Leeds SRA Handbook](#)

We would urge you to attend these meetings and let us know what you think

Solicitors wanting to give feedback directly can email us at regulation@lawsociety.org.uk

[Read the briefing and the article in full.](#)



Legal Aid Contract - what you need to know

The [Legal Aid Agency](#) (LAA) has just [opened the tender for the 2017 criminal legal aid contracts](#), and [published the 2017 draft contract](#). The LAA consulted on with the Law Society, [Legal Aid Practitioners Group](#) and the [Bar Council](#) for three weeks. While some of our suggestions and concerns were listened to, much of the contract remains unchanged from the consultation draft.

[Read the contract in full](#)

The Law Society is organising a series of roadshows across England and Wales to explain the contracts.

In the North these will be held on

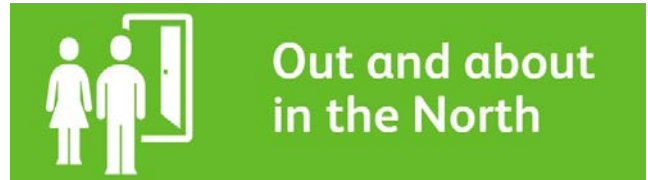
Criminal Legal Aid Roadshow

17 August 5- 7.30pm in Newcastle venue tbc

Criminal Legal Aid Roadshow

18 August 5 - 7.30pm in Manchester venue tbc

Dates of future roadshows are available on [our Events pages](#).



July has been a busy month for the team in the North. Early in July the team were asked by Greater Manchester's Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner to raise awareness following a Domestic Violence Homicide Review undertaken in Bury and an event was held on 4 July to take this forward.

As a result of the meeting, a representative from Manchester Law Society will now attend the Partnership Board's quarterly meetings to share information.

Over the month the team have attended the Joint Five meeting and dinner in Carey Street, Brexit events with firms in Leeds and a Local Government Conference in Gateshead. In addition the team have visited six Local Law Societies, undertaken six firm visits across the region and visited the Women's and Junior Law divisions in Newcastle and Gateshead.

During August we will be busy with SRA Handbook and Brexit consultation roadshows and roundtable visits with Catherine Dixon in the region.



Cyber Security - how we can help

It was recently reported that the Doomsday Clock – the countdown to global thermonuclear catastrophe - still stands at three minutes to midnight.

The UK's National Security Strategy makes cyber crime a Tier 1 threat, alongside international terrorism and military crisis. An even higher risk category than nuclear attack!

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In the Government's Cyber Security Breaches Survey 2016 the most costly cyber security breach identified was £3m. 24% of all businesses had experienced one or more cyber breaches in the past 12 months and the average cost of a breach was £3,480.

The most common category of attack involved viruses, spyware or malware (68%). The next, impersonating an organisation in emails or online (32%).

Any successful cyber attack on a law firm has serious reputational and compliance implications. What can you do to prevent or minimise these?

Reading the Law Society's Information Security Practice Note may be a good place to start. It advises identifying someone to take the lead on information security, undertaking a basic risk assessment and drawing up a policy.

Three other immediate steps you could take are joining the Cyber Security Information Sharing Partnership (CiSP), ensuring everyone takes our free cyber security training, and working towards Cyber Essentials accreditation.

CiSP is a joint industry government initiative to share cyber threat and vulnerability information. CiSP allows members to exchange cyber threat information in real time in a secure and confidential environment. CiSP members are also able to receive network monitoring reports. This is a free service and the Law Society can sponsor you to join. You can find the online application form by Googling 'CiSP'.

Cyber Security for Legal and Accountancy professionals is a free online course developed by the UK Government as part of its National Cyber Security Strategy with the support of both the Law Society and ICAEW. You can access it through our CPD centre.

Finally, Cyber Essentials is a set of basic cyber security controls against which organisations can be accredited. Successful applicants can display a logo to demonstrate they have met the standard.

Information about these initiatives and many others can be found on the [Law Society's cyber security webpage](#).

One of the most prevalent types of cyber attack in 2016 has been ransomware. Ransomware is trojan software that encrypts the files you have access to. In other words, if you are the managing partner of a firm and you activate a ransomware program like CryptoLocker it could encrypt all the files on your entire computer network. It is impossible for you to decrypt these files unless you pay a ransom.

[Read our practice management advice on how to protect your firm against scams](#)



City report confirms importance of legal sector to the UK economy

A [report from the TheCityUK](#) confirms the important contribution the legal sector makes to the British economy.

The Society's president Robert Bourns said:

"We know from our own research the substantial contribution the legal sector in England and Wales makes to the country's bottom line. The significance of our sector - worth £25.7bn in 2015 - is something to celebrate and something to promote especially in the wake of Brexit. We have the best law firms in the world. Their expertise and experience has been built up over many years - they set the global standard".

[Read the article in full here](#)

The Law Society - what is it doing post-Brexit?

Since the EU referendum result on 24 June, the Law Society has been busy providing information and advice to members on the implications for

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the legal profession. Below is a summary of the key actions we have undertaken.

Influencing decision makers

- We have written to the new lord chancellor
- Catherine Dixon gave evidence in parliament to the Justice Select Committee on 28 June..
- We have formerly used our [EU report](#) and [economic analysis](#) to engage with key stakeholders.

Gathering feedback from members

- A staff task force has been established which will be working with members through our usual governance processes.
- We are setting up a series of roundtables across England and Wales to engage with our members on this.
- We met with City partners on 7 July to discuss the impact on their businesses and any contingency planning that has taken place.
- We are in touch with the [Law Society of Scotland](#) and the [Law Society of Northern Ireland](#) and will take a united approach where we can.
- The CEO met with the EU committee, Brussels-based members and the Brussels-based representatives during a visit to the Brussels Office on Monday 11 July.

Communication and support to members and the public

Catherine Dixon has written to the following members to open lines of communication

- Registered European Lawyers established in England and Wales, and
- England and Wales solicitors established in the EU, the European Economic Area (which includes Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein), as well as Switzerland, as the EU lawyers
- We have published a dedicated [Brexit for the legal profession webpage](#).

[Read the article in full here](#)



Date for the diary - Presidents and Secretaries Conference dates for 2017

We are pleased to announce that the 2017 Presidents and Secretaries Conference will be held on Friday, 12 and Saturday, 13 May 2017 at Chancery Lane.

We look forward to seeing you then!

Working group is set up to manage contingency legal aid fund

The Bar Council, the Chartered Institute of Legal Executives (CILEx) and the Law Society of England and Wales have joined forces to set up a joint working group to examine the viability of a contingent legal aid fund (CLAF)

A CLAF is a recyclable, pooled fund which is financed by money derived from the damages recovered in successful civil cases where the client was supported by the fund. A CLAF would fund litigation for those who don't have the resources and for those who wouldn't qualify for legal aid. The intention of a CLAF is to facilitate access to justice.

At their first meeting, members of the group agreed to produce an initial report by September 2016 and a final report by the close of 2016.

[Read the article in full here](#)

A fitting tribute to Helen Thomas a much valued member of the Tees Valley Law Society

It is with great sadness that we inform you that Helen Thomas, 33, died on Monday, 4th July.

Helen studied Law at Nottingham Trent University and joined Latimer Hinks in her "sandwich" year. Her potential recognised, she was invited to join Latimer Hinks post graduation,

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working full time whilst at the same time undertaking her LPC at The College of Law, York via weekend classes.

Helen began her career at Latimer Hinks working in the Matrimonial Department before undertaking a seat in the Litigation Department and then transferring to (and remaining within) the Private Client Department. She qualified in 2008.

In 2011 Helen was named in the Legal 500: "Court of Protection Deputy" Helen secured her ACTAPS qualification in 2015, a qualification held by few lawyers in the Tees Valley area.

Helen was involved with Tees Valley Law Society throughout her career, initially as the trainee representative and later as a member of the Education & Training Committee.

Helen's funeral took place on Thursday, 14th July at 12.30pm at St Michael's Church, Heighington followed by a service at Darlington Crematorium.

How the Relationship Management Team in the North can help Local Law Societies, communities and groups

As your link to the national Law Society, we thought it might be useful for you if we outlined the ways the north team can help and support you. We can:

- Offer wider national overview/perspective on legal issues, the profession and the wider market
- Offer a network of support, attend and speak at local law society committee meetings, AGMs and attend events/dinners, award ceremonies and functions
- Provide contact data on solicitors in their catchment areas to help them market their society and boost membership
- Provide an overview of the region's local law societies, communities and groups

how they operate, how they can help one another, share best practice and improve their self sufficiency

- Provide a network of contact details to other LLSs and the wider profession
- Inform of forthcoming consultations, new practice notes, consultation responses and forthcoming events
- Promote TLS products to help and support the profession
- Promote LLS events and activities through regional social media channels, the regional pages and the monthly RM newsletter
- Provide a network of contacts in other areas to help and support local law societies, communities and groups

Organise the prestigious Presidents and Secretaries Conference every May to help Local Law Societies and communities network and share best practice



Features



Profile on Law Society President, Robert Bourns

Robert Bourns was sworn in as the 172nd President of The Law Society on 14 July 2016.

So what can we expect from his year as President and what key messages can we lift from his inaugural speech?

Robert has a well-founded reputation as an advocate and employment solicitor and is a Senior Partner at TLT Solicitors. He brings a down to earth can-do attitude to the role which The Gazette article calls "a safe pair of hands."

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He describes his role as President as ambassadorial with a duty to support The Law Society in all its initiatives. He describes The Law Society as 'a nexus' bringing everything together and acknowledges and praises the work that communities such as the JLD/WLD and Local Law Societies do across the country,

Robert will continue to support his predecessors themes of access to justice and justice for all but he expands these to talk about the profession having pride in what it has achieved so far and championing those achievements in practical ways. He has launched a campaign to drive this theme forward.

However, social mobility, equality and diversity and how people from all backgrounds should be able to enter the law if they want to are also his top priorities. His four main Presidential themes are:

- Brexit and the international standing of the profession
- Representing solicitors - justice for all and human rights
- Pride in the Profession by championing our contribution to the justice system, the economy and the community
- Equality and Diversity

[Find out more in his blog](#)

[Read his Gazette interview](#)

[Read his inaugural speech](#)



Estate administration: banking protocols

This practice note is relevant to any solicitor involved in the administration of estates.

This practice note contains protocols that set out procedures agreed with banks and building societies to clarify and speed up the estate administration process. This is a joint initiative with the [Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners \(STEP\)](#) and the [British Bankers' Association \(BBA\)](#)

[Read more](#)



Professional indemnity insurance

If you are a solicitor in private practice, you are required to take out and maintain PII in accordance with the SRA Indemnity Insurance Rules (the Rules). The SRA Handbook requires you to ensure that clients have the benefit of compulsory PII (outcome 1.8). Obtaining PII can be difficult. During 'hard' cycles of the PII, market some solicitors have been unable to obtain PII from a participating insurer or had to accept significantly higher premiums.

This practice note outlines solicitors' regulatory obligations relating to PII and provides an introduction to the application process and market-related issues

[Read more](#)

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Execution of a document using an electronic signature

This practice note has been prepared by a joint working party of the Law Society Company Law Committee and the City of London Law Society Company Law and Financial Law Committees (the JWP). This practice note has been developed to help parties (and their legal advisers) who wish to execute commercial contracts using an electronic signature or who wish to enter into a commercial contract with one or more other parties that intend to execute that contract using an electronic signature. The JWP has obtained legal advice from leading counsel (Mark Hapgood QC) on the use of electronic signatures as a valid method of executing documents. This note has been approved by leading counsel.

[Read more](#)

Reorganising your business: Employment law implications

This practice note is aimed at owners and managers within firms that are considering a reorganisation.

Reorganising a business can be an unsettling experience for all those involved. The aim of this note is to help owners of firms to familiarise themselves with some of the key concepts related to reorganisation.

[Read more](#)



Land Registry consultation on Local Land Charges Rules

We have responded to the Land Registry's [consultation on the Local Land Charges Rules 2017](#).

We support the standardisation of turnaround times, fees and the format of results. It is hoped that the new CON29 enquiry forms released on 4 July will, thanks to the assistance of the Local Government Association, Local Land Charges Institute and National Land Information Service, promote more standardisation of the format of results.

[Read our full response](#)

HMRC consultation on indirect taxes and inheritance tax

The Law Society has responded to HMRC's consultation on strengthening disclosure regimes for indirect taxes and inheritance tax.

We have commented on the proposed reform of VAT and inheritance tax related disclosure regimes which aims to prevent tax avoidance.

[Read the full response](#)

SRA consultation on removing barriers to switching regulators

The [Solicitors Regulation Authority \(SRA\)](#) is consulting on removing the obligation for run-off cover when a firm switches from the SRA to another approved regulator.

We agree that firms should be able to choose the most appropriate regulator for their business,

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provided that client protection is not removed with respect to any claims that might arise out of client matters concluded before the date the firm switched regulator.

However, under the SRA's proposals, the switching firm would not be obliged to have comparable SRA professional indemnity insurance (PII) minimum terms and conditions (MTC) cover in place under the new regulator. The lack of equivalence between the SRA's PII MTCs and the PII requirements of other approved regulators has the potential to leave clients of the SRA-regulated business without redress in circumstances where, but for the change of regulator, redress would have been available.

The SRA's aim to encourage a competitive market by removing unnecessary restrictions should not be at the expense of diluting solicitors' clients' financial protections. We urge the SRA to amend its proposals so that firms would only be able to switch regulator without triggering run-off on the condition that equivalent SRA MTC cover for a six-year period is in place, and covers claims arising from matters concluded before the switch.

[Read the full response](#)

FCA consultation on the UK equity IPO process

The [Financial Conduct Authority](#) (FCA) has published a discussion paper, exploring possible reform options and amendments to the regulatory framework to address its concerns and improve the UK initial public offering (IPO) process. The IPO process helps companies raise finance for investment opportunities for institutional investments, such as pension funds and insurance companies.

The Law Society and the [City of London Law Society](#) have jointly prepared a response to this discussion paper. We believe that the IPO process can be significantly improved if the issuer's principal disclosure document is made

available to potential investors earlier in the process.

[Read the full response](#)

Defendant's duty of candour and disclosure in judicial review proceedings

The Law Society has responded to the lord chief justice's consultation the duty of candour in judicial review proceedings.

The Law Society has welcomed the move to clarify the duty within the civil procedure rules but is adamant that there is parity in the guidance provided to both parties. We also suggest explanatory guidance to help unrepresented claimants discharge their duty.

[Read the full response](#)

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SRA Open Consultations

Looking to the Future - flexibility and public protection

The SRA are conducting a phased review of the SRA Handbook and their regulatory approach - Principles, Code of Conduct and Practice Framework Rules.

Submission deadline 21 September 2016

[Find out more](#)

Looking to the Future: Accounts Rules review

The SRA are conducting a review of the SRA Accounts Rules 2011, which govern the handling of client money.

Submission deadline 21 September 2016

[Find out more](#)

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