

Civil Litigation Section
Engagement Programme
2019-2020

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Foreword

Welcome to the Law Society's Civil Litigation Section 2019/2020 engagement programme.

It is a great honour to be writing as Chair of the Law Society's Civil Litigation Committee.



I am very much looking forward to taking up the role in what is likely to be a **continued period of great change for litigators**.

For most it would of course be daunting to see so many changes within such a short period of time but I know from my time as a litigator that we are a resolute bunch able to adapt and embrace every new opportunity as each presents itself. Our Section will continue to be at the **forefront of these changes**, providing top quality guidance, training and sharing ideas with litigators on how we can provide the best legal advice and legal services.

I also want us to continue to focus on how we can maintain a healthy profit so we can continue to reinvest properly in what we do and I want people to voice their ideas. After all, we are custodians of the Rule of Law and we need to try and maintain its health.

I am a great believer that tomorrow must always be an improvement on today and there is certainly no time to stand still or even blink at this point, so do speak up if you have any points you wish to make.

During my time as Chair I hope to grow the value of the services we can offer as a Section. Specifically I aim to do this by having, in addition to our already established services:-

1. An online LinkedIn community which shares ideas. This has been recently launched and there will be a focus on how we can continue to grow and improve it.
2. Regular podcasts on key changes in the law as well as webinars. This will be a range of general and more specific podcasts for practitioners.
3. A greater connection with the regions. As a committee we aim to reach out to local Law Societies to help their litigation committees and communities.

In my line of work, I am now seeing a different type of competition within our market place from the type when I first qualified. Healthy competition has of course always existed between qualified Solicitors but there is now as much healthy competition between Solicitors as there are between Solicitors, Legal Executives, and Paralegals. There is also a wide array of different entities all providing their own interpretation of how legal services should be delivered.

When I first heard the phrase "Tesco Law" many years ago now it conjured up images of off-the-shelf Wills being bleeped through a checkout for a fixed price.

In the short space of time since the phrase "Tesco Law" now conjures up different meanings. It has become far more than just new players entering our market. For me, it now conjures up thoughts of commoditisation, of simplifying legal processes, of AI solutions and even "North-shoring" to keep costs down - albeit I wish to stress that being a Yorkshireman I really am not a big fan of that phrase! During my time as Chair I want to focus on these things which help to improve our services but I also want to help recognise that providing good legal advice will always be about striking a delicate balance. I recognise that the Section needs to cater for Solicitors who do complex tasks (that cannot be commoditised) but it also need to cater for Solicitors who take up more managerial positions where they supervise and create processes that can be commoditised. Both types of Solicitor are invaluable to the profession as we continue to transition from pink copies and chits to a world of complex algorithms and machine learning.

We need to support all litigators across the skills spectrum.

If that were not enough to be getting on with we also have the dreaded B word to contend with shortly, at some point...I think. A bit like Lord Voldemort I do not wish to name it but this will also change the way we work today as lawyers. If only for a short time we will have to accept that there may be a period of turbulence which inevitably will throw up legal issues. I will need to be on my toes to help members when this eventually happens. That said, I have no doubt that everything will work out fine in the end because we will use our skills of spotting what lies ahead and as a profession we will be first in line to react. I want to continue to make our ability to properly recognise and solve problems our USP because excellence in solving problems underpins everything we have ever set out to do as practitioners. I want to try and provide a program that delivers this simple aim.

I am confident that adapting to change should not be difficult because I note with interest that we have been here many times before. Having looked up the origins of the words, "solicitor", "solicit" and "sol". It seems the business meanings for these words originate from 15th century English and French meanings and they state that we are "to disturb", "to stimulate", "to set in motion", and we are the "ones who urge".

I think those meanings go a long way to describing the work of a litigator and during my time as Chair, I intend to have them at the forefront of my thinking for the Section when delivering our programmes.

Last but by no means least I would like to thank my predecessor Jonathan Haydn-Williams for all his hard work and fantastic vision for the Section over the last two years. I feel as though I am simply taking the reins and setting out on a similar path as Jonathan.

Jonathan will of course continue to be an invaluable member of the committee and I look forward to continuing to work with him and all the other committee members in what should be an exciting period. I am lucky to have such a great committee working hard to provide you with some really excellent content.

James Perry

Law Society Civil Litigation Section Committee Chair

Our vision

To provide best practice guidance to the Civil Litigation profession on matters affecting practitioners and to develop content for professional development.

Terms of reference

To promote and develop the work of civil and commercial litigators, litigation support professionals and dispute resolvers across England & Wales.

To provide an annual programme of best practice guidance, services and events to supplement and enhance your continuing professional competence. Our programme will include workshops, conferences, peer-to-peer learning opportunities, best practice guidance, legal updates and know-how, case reports and access to discounts across a range of La Society products.

We will also provide a medium for the views of our members to be expressed within the Law Society to influence change and policy.

Our programme for 2019/20

Below is the planned programme of Civil Litigation Section support from 1 November 2019 to 31 October 2020.

This programme is updated throughout the year, please continue to check our [website](#) and subscribe to our newsletter for announcements and updates.

Our extensive reactive and proactive programme will address the following key areas:

- Updates on the Civil Procedure Rules & procedural case law
- Advancing technologies, including artificial intelligence
- Mediation and other forms of alternative dispute resolution
- Litigants in Person
- LASPO Part Two review
- Changing fee structures, including unbundling and damage based agreements
- Risk and compliance – avoiding professional negligence claims and other problems
- Holiday sickness claims
- Brexit

Events - included in the cost of your membership

Inclusive Conferences	
Half-day Spring Conference - London	
<u>Book your place</u>	
When:	29 April 2020 (13:00-17:30)
Location	The Law Society, London
Cost:	Included in the cost of your membership
Half-day Autumn Conference - London	
When:	21 October 2020
Location:	London
Cost:	Included in the cost of your membership
<p style="text-align: center;">Due to the success of our conferences in previous years, we will continue to hold a Spring and Autumn Conference.</p> <p>As always, the conferences promise to put you in front of experts who will provide you with practical advice and technical know-how. The speakers will be on hand to answer your questions, ensuring that you leave the conference with expert insight that you can apply to your practice. The conferences, concluding with a drinks reception, will provide you with plenty of opportunities to network with your peers, the speakers and the Civil Litigation Section Committee.</p>	
	

Seminars - TBC	
When and location:	TBC
Cost:	Included in the cost of your membership
<p>These bitesize workshops will provide you with technical know-how and guidance to react to the ongoing market changes in the property market.</p> <p>For the full programme and to book your place, keep an eye on our events page.</p>	

Online Learning

Webinars - included in the cost of your membership

Mediation: 2020 vision/the future for litigators	
When:	04 December 2019 (12:30 - 13:30)
Speaker:	Peter Causton, Law Society Civil Litigation Council Member
Costs Update	
When:	April 2020
Speaker:	TBC
Privilege	
When:	21 April 2020 (12:30 - 13:30)
Speaker:	Colin Passmore, senior partner, Simmons & Simmons LLP
Commercial Litigation Update	
When:	October 2020
Speaker:	TBC
As well as our programme of inclusive webinars, we also offer a 20% discount on a range of webinars drawn from across the breadth of Law Society practice areas.	

Civil LitigationSection E-newsletter - *subscription included in membership*

Format:	Email
Publication:	Every two months.
<p>Keep up-to-date with legal developments and news with our newsletters, produced six times a year by experts in the field. Each mailing contains news and best practice guidance, details of policy updates and analysis, case reports and forthcoming events and webinars.</p> <p>Also Use to keep up-to-date with developments and Law Society activities.</p>	

2019-2020 Additional Benefits

Podcasts

A newly introduced benefit, civil litigation section podcasts will keep you up-to-date with recent developments through short discussions with expert speakers. These bitesize podcasts can be downloaded for you to listen when on the move, making them a convenient way to stay informed of legal changes.

Listen to the podcasts [here](#).

Website Archive

As well as recent news, articles and features, we also have a searchable bank of content and guidance, webinars, practice notes you can use.

It also contains details of future events and webinars drawn from across the Law Society's supported practice areas.

Visit the [website](#) to stay up-to-date and brief yourself on past developments.

LinkedIn

Join our growing network of civil litigators and dispute resolution experts to keep up-to-date with updates and changes affecting your work and also for the opportunity to join a forum for discussion and feedback.

[Join us](#) and get involved in the discussion.

Twitter

Follow our Twitter page @LSCivLit for details of forthcoming events and webinars, special offers and news from the Ministry of Justice, HMCTS, Supreme Court and Civil Procedure Rules Committee.

Committee

Thank you to our committee members

This programme of engagement was created in close consultation with the Civil Litigation Section Advisory Committee to ensure it is relevant and timely.

Committee members meet regularly throughout the year to discuss key issues and topics facing civil litigators and dispute resolution experts. Committee members help formulate Law Society policy and co-ordinate a programme of events and commentary for the exclusive benefit of Section members.

We would like to thank the committee members for their time, commitment and contribution.