

DONCASTER AND DISTRICT LAW SOCIETY



EST. 1937

SUMMER 2021 NEWSLETTER

SOME FORM OF NORMALITY

'have a fantastic but
safe rest of the summer'



Finally, it seems like life is on its way back to some form of normality and I am looking forward to what this might mean for our society over the coming months.

We as a society have already seen some of the things we loved before COVID come back to us and we've been able to start planning some events that have been long overdue.

June saw us organise the very first Doncaster Legal Walk in aid of Access to Justice. The event was a huge success and very well attended, despite the unsettled weather and restrictions still being in place – more about the walk

later in the newsletter but I would just like to thank everyone that took part, helped with organising and sponsored or donated. I hope that we can build on this year's success in the future.

As restrictions are now lifted, I hope everyone can get back to enjoying the things they love, with the people they love and have a fantastic but safe, rest of the summer.

Andrea

IN THIS EDITION:

- Some form of normality
- Doncaster Legal Walk 2021
- Freedom Day
- Yorkshire Union of Law Societies
- Paul's been busy!
- Meet our Training Officer

DONCASTER LEGAL WALK 2021

We finally did it!!



After much planning and anticipation, a couple of cancelled dates and a lot of praying for good weather, on the 21 June 2021 we finally managed to hold our very first Doncaster Legal Walk in aid of the Access to Justice Foundation.

Legal walks across the county and country are a highlight in the access to justice calendar. Normally, legal professionals from the Doncaster District would join a walk in Sheffield, Leeds or York but this time round, we wanted to have our own fun and show that Doncaster is a key part of the Yorkshire legal network. Our walk was originally planned for June 2020, but it was just not meant to be. However, we would not be defeated and as soon as we could get a date back in the calendar we did. And it was worth the wait.

The walk was well attended and supported. We had an esteemed group of lead walkers: President - Andrea Pashley, Chair of the Yorkshire Legal Support Trust - David Barraclough, High Sheriff of South Yorkshire - Martin James Claude McKervey Esq, Under Sheriff of South Yorkshire - Colonel George Kilburn MBE DL, His Honour Judge Robinson and Charles Godfrey.

In total 6 teams took part but due to government restrictions, teams had to set off at a staggered start and were limited to groups of 6 walkers as per the government guidelines in place at the time.

Despite the limitations and the unpredictable weather, walkers enjoyed the sites of Doncaster and completed the walk in an average time of just over 2 hours. The walk concluded at Regents Square and walkers were met with a simple, outdoor, informal drinks reception.

Each team attracted sponsorship individually and the team with the most money raised will receive a trophy for their efforts at our annual ball in September. As a society, we raised £2136.88 for the Access to Justice Foundation and the committee has agreed make a donation to bring the total to £2500.00.

Summer 2021 NEWSLETTER

When commenting on the walk, president, Andrea Pashley said "thank you all for your support and especially our sub-committee for all of the hard work that went in to making our first legal walk such a success. I think it was enjoyed by everyone. The weather was really kind, which helped, and I thought we had great attendance and the route really did show some of the beautiful sights in our town. I hope this is the first of many so we as a society can continue to support such a worthy cause."



THE
ACCESS
TO JUSTICE
FOUNDATION



FREEDOM DAY

Looking back and looking forward



So there has been so much speculation about 'Freedom Day' and many a social media post about what people would do when restrictions were lifted. So, we asked some of our committee members to reflect on the pandemic and what freedom day means to them. Here are some of the responses:

Sarah Naylor, Honorary Treasurer: "The biggest thing I think I'll take away from the lockdown experience is how much technology played a part and opened things up for everyone. Whether that be in a work environment where everyone found that actually we could work remotely with the right technology in place, or at home when keeping connected with people meant zoom quizzes, face timing grandparents etc. I have had really mixed feelings about "freedom day" and the lead up to it as we've progressed through Boris' roadmap out of lockdown. Everything opening back up has been wonderful (I mean haircuts were WELL overdue!) in a lot of respects, especially for some businesses who simply weren't able to trade at all during lockdown, and in terms of seeing family in person. On the flip side I'm already starting to miss the slower pace of life I got accustomed to during lockdown where weekends could just be long bike rides or walks with the kids. Life is gearing back up to 100miles an hour with diaries starting to fill up again with activities and trips etc. Whilst those things are great, I think I will miss the downtime lockdown gave – for me personally, as my life is always busy and 100miles an hour!"

Paul Singh, Diversity and Inclusion rep / In-House Liaison: "One thing I will always remember is video hearings. I know they are here to stay and they are a good thing as they improve access to justice. However, they were a shock to get used to and I hope the next generation of lawyers get proper training on them, including on how it is most appropriate to convey your assent to a judge with a double thumbs up, without looking like Wee Jimmy Krankie. One thing I am looking forward to is training courses and networking events going back to normal They

were a great way to break up the monotony of a day in the office when they were in person. Having them by video has meant that you often end up just sitting at your desk non-stop all day and you miss out on the interactions with other professionals before and afterwards, where you can make some real personal connections"

Jess Mason, Training Officer: "My thing to remember from the lockdown would be qualifying as a solicitor and freedom day to me means getting our spontaneity back!"

Diane Parker, Secretary: "Lockdown memories: Watching the entire run of Once Upon a Time on Netflix (7 seasons, 22 episodes per season) and becoming a "parker" as I attempted to assign spaces in the carpark as people began returning to the office in summer 2020. Things I am looking forward to: Going to visit my mum in Wales, Singing Brownie Bells properly – with linked hands in a circle – instead of all spaced out and not wearing a mask – oh I hate that with a passion! Although that requirement isn't necessarily going to go."

Maria Dallas, PR Officer: "My 1 thing I will always remember is the community spirit and togetherness that came in the first lockdown (although my close second favourite memory will video chats and virtual 'nights out'). Freedom day to me means I can freely and easily plan go to see my friends and family, wherever they may be, without worrying about hugging or numbers".

What will you remember about lockdown and the last 12 months plus? And what does freedom day mean to you? Write it down and look back on it in years to come – as difficult as it's all been at times, there will be things that make you laugh, cry and roll your eyes.

DONCASTER AND DISTRICT LAW SOCIETY OFFICERS FOR 2020/2021

President – Andrea Pashley (Malcolm C Foy & Co)
Vice President – Stephanie Veysey (Atherton Godfrey LLP)
Junior Vice President – Sarah Thiede (Malcolm C Foy & Co)
Secretary – Diane Parker (Atherton Godfrey LLP)
Treasurer – Sarah Naylor (Atherton Godfrey)
Membership Officer – Janice Oxley / Kirsten Craig (Dawson & Burgess Solicitors)
Social Officer – Racheal Harrison (Malcolm C Foy & Co)
PR Officer – Maria Dallas (Atherton Godfrey LLP)
Training Officer - Jessica Mason / Eleanor Storey (Malcolm C Foy & Co)
In House Liaison Officer – Paul Singh (National Education Union)
National Council Officer – Mark Newby (Quality Solicitors Jordons)
Parliamentary Liaison Officer – Tony Rawlings (Paul Bullen & Co)
Diversity & Inclusion Officer – Paul Singh (National Education Union)

WHAT IS THE YORKSHIRE UNION OF LAW SOCIETIES?

If you attend committee meetings, the AGM or even read our newsletter, you will often hear about the Yorkshire Union of Law Societies. But what is it and what do they do? Diane Parker, Honorary Secretary and Andrea Pashley, Vice President give us the following synopsis:

"Yorkshire is a large and diverse county containing well over 1000 legal practices.

Within Yorkshire there are 12 different local law societies, again themselves very diverse ranging from one of the largest local societies in England and Wales – Leeds, to very small societies with a handful of members.

All seek to provide support to their members, traditionally by providing a combination of social events, training and networking. They act as conduits into the local community by liaising with other professional and trade groups like the Estate Agents Association, the Chamber of Commerce etc.

Leeds Law Society is very active with some of the civic activities within Leeds joining trade delegations into Europe for example, whilst one of the other local societies has links with a law society in Africa and regularly sends books and undertakes fundraising for that community.

The Yorkshire Union is an acknowledgment that there is strength in numbers and provides a conduit for the local societies to speak with a louder voice. Legal consultations are of particular importance as the government will usually look at the numbers of membership organisations to measure their weight.

Chancery Lane has always had difficulty communicating with its members and again the YU is useful vehicle for this – facilitating communication in both directions. Law Society Council members are for the most part geographic – but the geography is "Yorkshire" for our 3 council members (with a 4th seat specifically for Leeds). Again, for the council members, the YU provides a useful means of speaking to members when, pre Covid, they couldn't reasonably be expected to attend the committee meetings of all the Yorkshire societies. There are more than 100 miles of Yorkshire east to west (Todmorden to Scarborough) and north to south (Saltburn to Bawtry).

In the past, the YU has also tried to provide some social functions, although the geography plays against this. We have attended YU social events in York (annual dinner) and Wetherby (murder mystery evening) in the days when YU meetings used to be hosted by the constituent members, usually at a local hotel and which included a subsidised lunch."

So, there you have it, the Yorkshire Union of Law Societies is a vital part of our legal community and provides us with valuable links out of the area.

In the next edition, we will attempt to explain the vital role of the national council and what this means to society members.

Follow us online:



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PAUL'S BEEN BUSY!!!

Diversity and Inclusion / In-House Liaison Officer, Paul Singh, has been very busy in recent times. As well as finding great training and events to share with society members, Paul has also had an article published and been invited to speak as part of a major industry event.

This month, as part of his role as In-House Chair of Employment Lawyers Association, our In-House Officer was a panel member one of the talks held during ELA's annual conference week. Together with two solicitors from Herbert Smith Freehills and a clinical psychologist, Paul spoke on the important topic of mental health issues amongst lawyers. The panel candidly opened up about mental health struggles they had faced themselves, in an attempt to break the taboo surrounding this subject. They talked about the impact of lockdown and how this has increased stress amongst lawyers. They also had an open discussion about ways in which we can all take steps to avert burnout and improve resilience by spotting the warning signs early and avoiding detrimental coping mechanisms.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission recently published a report on Race and Ethnic Disparities. However, the report provoked controversy, particularly amongst the legal profession. Our Diversity and Inclusion Officer co-wrote a response to the report which was published in the Employment Lawyer's Association Briefing magazine. The focus of the response was the failure by the report to go into sufficient detail to properly drive any change in government policy towards race issues. The report made some helpful recommendations but one of the main criticisms was that the report seemed to suggest that race issue was caused by the occasional "bad apple" and ignored that it can be a systemic issue. A full copy of the article can be obtained by contacting ELA.

If you feel your firm could benefit from a similar talk or if you would like more information regarding Paul's article, please feel free to contact Paul or another member of the DDLS team.



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2021

Formal Notice is hereby given that the AGM of Doncaster and District Law Society is to be held virtually via Microsoft Teams on Thursday 16th September 2020 from 12 noon.

In accordance with the rules of the Society the business to be extracted is:

- 1 – Receive the Annual Accounts of the Society**
- 2 – Approve the Accounts**
- 3 – Outgoing Presidents Remarks on the last 12 Months**
- 4 – Election of Officers**
- 5 – Incoming President's Welcome**

The current Vice-President, Stephanie Veysey, will become President at the AGM and the current Junior Vice-President, Sarah Thiede, will become Vice President. Nominations are requested for all other officers of the society as follows:

Junior Vice President

Secretary

Treasurer

Public Relations Officer

Training Officer

Social Officer

Parliamentary Liaison Officer

Membership Officer

Some officers are willing to remain in their current positions but others would like to step down if nominations are forthcoming. In any event, nominations are invited for all posts. Nominations will close at 4pm on Wednesday 8th September.

We would also welcome a representative of each firm to join the Committee which meets once a month usually on the first Tuesday of the month at 12 noon.

Please pass on to all in your firm. If you wish to attend, please email d.parker@athertongodfrey.co.uk so that you can be sent a link to join the meeting.

COMMITTEE SPOTLIGHT: JESS MASON and ELEANOR STOREY



1. What would you be if you were not a lawyer?

Jess - I'd probably most likely be a Criminal Psychologist as this is what I originally applied to university to do but then changed by mind the week before term started!

Eleanor - I'm from a family of teachers so might have followed suit!

2. Where do you work and what do you do?

Jess - MCF, Property Solicitor, recently qualified in March 2021.

Eleanor - I am a Property Solicitor at Malcolm Foys, and do a mix of Conveyancing and Commercial Property

3. What made you want a career in Law?

Jess - When making the decision at 18, it was most definitely American Crime programmes and I'd be lying if I said otherwise! Now I can't imagine doing anything else.

Eleanor - Studied Law at University because I knew it opened up to a lot of different opportunities and decided to give myself a challenge.

4. Tell us about your role on the committee.

Jess - Training Officer – trying to encourage people to take part in online webinars as opposed to in person training this year!

Eleanor - I'm joint training officer with Jess, and together we arrange training events/ courses for Society members.

5. Tell us an interesting fact about you.

Jess - I've been a season ticket holder at Sheffield United FC for what will be the 16th year this year.

Eleanor - I did a skydive in New Zealand

6. Why do you think Doncaster is great?

Jess - Doncaster is great because its not quite as busy as Leeds or Sheffield, but the cocktails are just as good!

Eleanor - All my favorite people are from Doncaster and the wildlife park is pretty good