

Networking...

The national voice of Law Centres

Equalities Funding Success for Law Centres

Many of you will be aware that LCF and the Disability Rights Commission have agreed funding worth over £1,000,000 to provide a casework and rights awareness service in 10 to 15 Law Centres over the next two years. The LCF is seeking expressions of interest from Law Centres by 30th September to participate in this **"Disability Rights Project"**.

This is a major initiative which will be particularly valuable in informing people about their rights under the goods and services provisions contained within Part III of the Disability Discrimination Act, as well as providing the cutting edge to the legislation in cases in which litigation is necessary. Hopefully, good co-ordination and a positive evaluation of the work of the project will lead to the provision of similar services in Law Centres across the other six strands of discrimination work.

LCF had another funding success for funding equalities work in Law Centres with the announcement of a grant of just under £160,000 from the DTI to support training in sexual orientation, religion and belief discrimination law strands. The funding will be for one year and we hope to announce further details in the near future.



Law Centres' already strong profile in equalities and human rights work, combined with the development of these further funding opportunities, will lead to Law Centres playing a crucial role at local level in the take-up of progressive legal rights.

Regulation of Law Centres

At the LCF's recent General Meeting which was held at the Law Society on 5th September, a motion from Camden Community Law Centre was passed expressing dismay at the proposed change in the regulation of non-solicitor immigration advisors in Law Centres. Law Centres felt aggrieved that the Law Society and the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner were proposing to regulate Law Centres differently to our private sector solicitor counterparts. Also, we could see no reason in the current legislation to justify the change from the previous position which had been agreed in 2002.

Law Centres Federation

18 Warren Street
London W1T 5LR

Tel: 020 7387 8570
Fax: 020 7387 8368

E-Mail: info@lawcentres.org.uk
Website: www.lawcentres.org.uk

Index

Director's Report	1.
Legal Services News	3
LawWorks Clinics	4
Law Centre News	6
Public Law Project	8
Immigration News	8
Housing News	10
Employment News	11
Disability Rights	12
Funding News	14
Shorts	16
Conferences\Training	19
Books\Reports	20
Jobs	23
LCF Annual Conference	24



I am awaiting responses from the Commissioner and the Chief Executive of the Law Society to a letter I have written to them asking them to review the situation, (I have already circulated the "holding" letter I have already received in response from the Law Society).

Not surprisingly, at the reception after the general meeting which was generously provided by the Law Society at the President's Official residence, representatives used the opportunity to lobby Kevin Martin, Law Society President, and Janet Paraskava, Law Society Chief Executive on the issue. Very much a case of opportune timing!

At the reception Kevin Martin paid tribute to the work of Law Centres. He especially highlighted the achievements of **Oldham and Rochdale Law Centres**, which were recognised in the Solicitor Race Equality awards this year and **Anna Skehan** from Islington Law Centre who was awarded "*Immigration Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year*" in June.



Anna Skehan with Kevin Martin, President of the Law Society at the reception held on 5th September. Alan Blacker (far left) and David Bradbury (right) are both LCF Executive members

Notwithstanding the OISC controversy, Law Centres and the Law Society share common causes. Ensuring that the forthcoming legislation on the regulation of the legal professions protects independence and professional standards of the professions is one.

LCF is also, pleased that the Law Society has signalled that it will pursue a more proactive campaign for access to justice and legal aid provision. Kevin Martin wrote to the Chancellor Gordon Brown last week asking for more money for hard pressed legal aid Lawyers. No doubt he was inspired by LCFs demonstration and delivery of our letter to the Chancellor in April!

Birmingham Date

LCF will again be lobbying and exhibiting at Labour Party Conference this year. We are holding a joint fringe meeting with the Legal Action Group on "*Young People's Civil Rights*". Speakers are Emma Day and Penny Gentles-Choudhury from Enfield Law Centre, Alison Hannah, director of Legal Action Group and Maria Eagle MP, Minister for Children, Young People and Families.

LCF's campaigning work will feature in the annual conference to be held on 11th and 12th November in Birmingham. The Flyer and Booking Form is included in this mailing. Please note we have included a section on the form to book for workshops this year.

I would urge anyone interested in standing for election to LCF's Executive Committee to complete a nomination form (these have previously been sent to Law Centres). To ensure that the work of LCF reflects the needs of Law Centres and our clients it is important that the EC is representative.

Finally, **Jen Corlew**, Communications and Campaigns worker is leaving LCF to join "Liberty" as their press officer. Jen has had a great impact in the year she has been with LCF and she will be missed. I'm sure you all join me in wishing her well in her new post. She has agreed to run her workshop on media training at the conference. This proved very popular last year, so book early for this and the other workshops.

Steve Hynes
Director
Law Centres Federation

Legal Services

Review of Legal Aid Procurement

The Department for Constitutional Affairs has published terms of reference for Lord Carter's Review of Legal Aid Procurement. The Review is part of a plan to implement a package of reforms to the way publicly funded legal services and representation are procured and could greatly influence the Legal Service Commission's strategy out now for consultation.

The Review is based on the DCA's vision set out in "*A Fairer Deal for Legal Aid*" published earlier this year. Whilst many of the reforms focus on criminal defence services, it will inevitably affect civil legal services. The reforms aim to encourage a more open and responsive market, share risks between supplier and purchaser, and improve the way the state engages with lawyers when procuring services. Could this be another attempt to introduce block contracting and/or competitive tendering ?

The Reviews and resulting plan will be produced by Lord Carter in agreement with the Lord Chancellor by early 2006.

Copies of "*A Fairer Deal for Legal Aid*" is on the DCA website www.dca.gov.uk/laid. The LCF is currently working on a response to the LSC's Strategy, "*Making Legal Rights a Reality*" which LCF director, Steve Hynes wrote about in our last edition. The closing date for submission is **14th October 2005**.

Not-for-Profit Contracts

In LSC newsletter, Focus 48, an announcement was made that NfP General Civil Contracts will be extended by a year to 31st March 2007. The LSC note a number of reasons including the following, "the LSC is considering moving towards more holistic social welfare law contracts (covering debt, employment, housing and welfare benefits), which are neither solicitor nor NfP specific. In this context, it is more practical to align the expiry date of NfP contracts with that of solicitors' contract." The LSC however are keen to introduced completed case targets for debt, welfare benefits, employment and housing next April. *More news shortly.*

Preferred Supplier Pilot

The LSC published a summary of its evaluation of the Preferred Supplier pilot in September and says that it paves the way for a national roll out in 2006. Amongst the finding, the pilot showed :

- * a partnership-based approach, where there is a designated LSC Relationship Manager, works well for suppliers;
- * a less intrusive approach with service providers does not compromise quality;
- * average case costs did not increase or decrease. Suppliers indicated that they would expect to save money from reduced transaction costs if the LSC were to further streamline its auditing and processing systems;
- * 90% of the service providers supported the use of independent Peer Review.

A consultation paper outlining the LSC's proposals for the national scheme is expected before year end. The Evaluation Report Summary is available on the LSC website: www.legalservices.gov.uk/civil/how/psp

Small Claims

The Department for Constitutional Affairs has announced that people appealing against small claims cases will be protected from having to pay legal costs. A consultation paper to make changes to Civil Appeal Rules, proposes that protection again high legal costs should be extended to small claims cases on appeal. It also proposes that there should be a cap of £1,000 on all costs between parties at appeal.

The consultation ends on **2nd December**. Information on the DCA website: www.dca.gov.uk.

Legal Aid Lobby

Law Centres are invited to attend a meeting at Portcullis House, Westminster to lobby Greater London MPs about legal aid. It takes place on Wednesday, **26th October** at 5.00 and lasts until 7.00 p.m. The meeting has been sponsored by Martin Linton MP and has been organised by South London Law Society and the Law Society's Greater London Regional Office. If you would like to attend, email: Morag.Goldfinch@lawsociety.org.uk

Case Law Database

The **Commission for Racial Equality** has set up a case law database on their website. It contains summaries of significant cases that have shaped the law relating to race discrimination in employment. Links are provided where relevant to other cases that have helped refine a particular point of law. There are seven categories: Direct Discrimination, Indirect Discrimination, Victimisation, Vicarious Liability, Range of Contracts and Remedies and Procedure. The database can be found at : www.cre.gov.uk/legal/casedatabase

Lady Hale makes case for diverse judiciary

Lady Hale, the first woman Law Lord, gave a keynote lecture entitled *'Making a difference - why we need a more diverse judiciary'* at an event organised jointly by Law Centre(Northern Ireland) and Queen's University's Servicing the Legal System.



Lady Hale speaking in June at an event organised by Law Centre (NI)

Picture by Lesley Doyle©

In her lecture, Lady Hale made the case for ensuring that the selection of judicial appointments covers the widest pool of talent, embracing both solicitors and barristers as well as lawyers working in the public and voluntary sector and within academia, and addressing the under-representation of certain sections of society, in particular women and ethnic minorities. She outlined some of the advantages that a more diverse judiciary can bring to the role of judging without in any way detracting from quality.

The lecture was particularly timely as it coincided with the announcement of the new Judicial Appointments Commission. The Commission's statutory responsibilities include conducting the appointment process for judges and other judicial appointments, ensuring as far as practicable that the judiciary is reflective of the community and developing a programme of action to widen the pool of applications so that appointments are reflective of the community in Northern Ireland.

The Chair of the Commission (the Lord Chief Justice Brian Kerr) and a number of Commissioners attended the lecture, a copy of which will be published in a future edition of the Northern Ireland Legal Quarterly. For more information, the Commission's website address is www.nijac.org.

LawWorks Clinics

My first year as LawWorks Projects Manager draws to a close. A time to pause for reflection on decent progress, unlikely successes and frustrating delays? Maybe, but that might be a trifle pedestrian. Perhaps the following doesn't get much faster, but indicates one way in which the project is progressing.

A portion of LawWorks Clinics' work involves setting up PLE schemes. In the funding proposal document the P stands for preventative, but most people seem to prefer public. So we have Preventative/Public Legal Education.

LawWorks clinics staff will help PLE schemes in a similar way to the clinics work: recruiting volunteers, bringing parties together, background support work. Many of you will be aware of the premise behind PLE - if people know about their legal rights and how the system works they can hopefully be active in their own cause to avoid their problems from escalating.

The LawWorks Clinics promote two approaches:

1. **StreetLaw**

A model in use in the USA, the idea is that a community group works with pro bono lawyers to identify legal issues they have that could be addressed in an educational way. This could be a residents' association looking at cleaning derelict properties, small businesses concerned about trading standards etc. It is recognised from the outset that legal assistance will probably not stop with a session, or series of sessions. Questions will emerge that volunteers may not be able to answer immediately, or the community group may require further assistance such as communication with the local council.

2. **Citizenship Foundation**

Schools and colleges are supposed to include citizenship education in the curriculum, but often struggle to do so. The CF provides a range of resources across many relevant topics, including legal rights and the legal system. While CF is not prescriptive about use of their materials, they provide immediate structure and assistance to volunteers, as opposed to the more organic StreetLaw model.

LawWorks Training

The autumn training programme has now been finalised. We begin on 10th October with a session on Small Claims, led by Maria Muriel-Sanchez of Battersea Law Centre. Topics cover the main areas of social welfare law, including sessions on advice skills and interviewing techniques. The sessions are free, CPD accredited and open to all volunteers at LawWorks Clinics and Law Centre staff. For more information and registration please go to <http://lawworks.tribalinternet.co.uk/>

A lot of interest in legal volunteering comes from law students, on both professional courses and at undergraduate level. A handful of pro bono schemes across the country have been set up to

enable students to operate in advice giving roles, but this will not be an option for most. PLE provides a useful outlet for their interest. Naturally, lawyers who may be interested in delivering PLE sessions are encouraged to do so. As well as delivering sessions their assistance may also be needed to help supervise student groups.

PLE is something that Law Centres are involved in. It sits squarely within the community agenda which Law Centres serve. There will be a PLE workshop led by Alison Hannah of Legal Action Group at the LCF Annual conference. Please come if you have experience in this work that you would like to share, or if you are interested in developing PLE at your Law Centre.

Julian Lewis
LawWorks Projects Manager
020 7387 8574
julian@lawcentres.org.uk

Stop press:

***Coming soon to an LCF Annual Conference
near you!***

Got a problem with your pro bono clinic?
Want to set one up?
Access free professional advice at the

Clinic Clinic

Jurys Hotel, Birmingham
11 & 12 November 2005

Appointment only - information in
your conference welcome packs.

(So it's a gimmick, but I will be there - JL)

Law Centre News

Southwark Law Centre

Harriet Harman QC MP, Secretary of State at the Department of Constitutional Affairs spoke at **Southwark Law Centre's** AGM on 19th September about the new Equality and Human Rights Commission.



The Minister applauded Law Centres for taking up equality and human rights cases, saying :

"I fully support the Law Centre movement's key principles to take up breaches of human rights in cases involving discrimination. Law Centres must continue to play a central role in discrimination cases and train others to take on this work as well."

For news about Southwark's work over the past year, see over.

Grand Opening !

Kirklees Law Centre is to be officially opened on 20th October at Dewsbury Town Hall. The theme of the launch is "Partnership".

Guest speakers include Bridget Prentice MP, Parliamentary Secretary for the Department of Constitutional Affairs, Vivienne Stone, Disability Rights Commission, Khalid Hussain, Kirklees Racial Equality Council and Peter Nelson from the Legal Services Commission.

Oldham Law Centre

Asian Women's Rights

The Asian Women's Rights project continues to ensure that legal services are made accessible to Asian women. To do this effectively a multi-agency approach has been adopted and they maintain strong networks with other organisations and solicitors. They are working in partnership with the Oldham Domestic Violence Forum where the Law Centre project worker is chair and the project also convenes the Ethnic Minority Sub Group of the Forum.

The Asian Women's Right project is part of the steering group of the Forced Marriages Forum in Oldham. Compact information cards have been produced and are being distributed so that individuals facing forced marriage know how to access help. The project continues to deliver training around forced marriage, and women with unsettled immigration status.

The project takes on direct casework to assist women being forced into marriages abroad and women who have been forcefully returned abroad. They have developed a group to campaign for better rights for women who enter the UK as spouses and are subject to immigration control.

The Law Centre has also been involved in setting up the "*Roshni*" group that deals with the unmet needs of women who are victims of the two-year probationary period that applies to people who come to the UK to join their husband or wife. A conference was held in March 2005 to raise awareness amongst professionals who come into contact with such women.

The LCF is delighted to welcome **Talat Jabin**, the Asian Women's Rights worker to our conference this year to talk about work around domestic violence.

The above information about the Asian Women's Rights project was taken from Oldham's Annual Report for 2004-5. The Report includes an analysis of the responses to client questionnaires returned during that period. The results showed that 90% of clients said that they would use the service again. Oldham specialises in Housing, Employment, Welfare Benefits, Education, Immigration and Nationality and Asian Women's Rights.

Southwark Law Centre

Possession Prevention Project

Southwark Law Centre set up this joint project with Blackfriars Advice Centre in 2004. It aims to reduce eviction in Southwark through early intervention, policy work and increased access to advice. The project has trained nearly 50 individuals from various community and advice agencies in preventing evictions. The aim is that these workers will be able to identify persons at risk of eviction and intervene at an early stage as a result of their training or refer the tenant for more specialist advice and support. The project works closely with the Southwark Housing Lawyers' Group and has implemented an electronic referral pilot to assist in the efficient take up of cases.

The project worked with the Community Legal Service Partnership in Southwark to prepare an advice leaflet for residents and will be working in partnership with them to design a leaflet detailing advice agencies specialising in Welfare Benefits, Debt and Housing. This will be sent to tenants faced with possession proceedings/eviction. The project has increased awareness of the Duty Scheme amongst court users. This has been done by providing new information posters in the court and meeting court staff to promote and monitor the scheme.

The project has been carrying policy work and has attended meeting of local housing forums. Contributions were made to the Southwark Housing Strategy which will be effective for the next five years. The project drew attention to unlawful practices in how Housing Benefit appeals were being dealt with and hopes to influence the Council's rent policy.

Campaign against Hate Crime

Southwark Law Centre has obtained funding from the Hate Crime Unit to enable them to promote the new regulations prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation. The work included training and producing materials including leaflets about the regulations and handing them out at shopping centres and at community events.

Bury Law Centre Open Day

On the 2nd September, Bury Law Centre held an Open Day at their new larger premises on Bank Street in Bury. The aim of this Open Day was to promote, raise awareness and increase understanding of the services that the Law Centre offers to the local community. The new Volunteer Services Development Project section at the Law Centre also used the Open Day to promote the Big Lottery funded pro bono initiative.

The occasion included final farewells to Practice Manager **John Nicholson**, as he left to begin his pupillage at Doughty Street Chambers and to welcome new Practice Manager, **Hazel Bayley**. During the weeks before the Open Day, John had been a driving force in the publicity and media coverage surrounding Section 9 of the Immigration and Asylum Act. As the only source of Immigration and Asylum advice in Bury, Bury Law Centre was at the centre of the campaign to halt this inhumane legislation and John's contribution to this campaign has been invaluable. *See page 8 for more about the campaign.*



David Chaytor MP (left), Hazel Bailey (centre) and chair of the Law Centre, Sam Cohen on the right.

The Open Day was attended by a broad cross section of local private practice solicitors as well as members of local advice agencies. The Law Centre was pleased that **David Chaytor MP** as well as several Councillors from the Bury Area Board were able to attend.

Our thanks to Hazel for sending in the news. Hazel can be contacted by email: h.bayley@burylawcentre.co.uk or by telephone: 0161 272 0666.

Public Law Project

The Public Law Project (PLP) is a national legal charity which aims to improve access to public law remedies for those whose access to justice is restricted by poverty or some other form of disadvantage.

Within this broad remit PLP has adopted three main objectives:

- * increasing the accountability of public decision-makers;
- * enhancing the quality of public decision-making;
- * improving access to justice.

The last few years have been a time of change and growth for PLP - **Conrad Haley** was appointed as Director in 2003, and since then the organisation has expanded to include a full-time researcher, a part-time events and resource development officer, one full-time and one part-time lawyer and an administrator.

PLP is now pursuing several new areas of work, as well as being busy with judicial reviews and in the Court of Appeal. We have recently undertaken casework and training on accountability for work-related deaths, the use of protective costs orders in judicial review proceedings, and challenging discrimination on the grounds of nationality under EC law. One particular priority area for us at the moment is working to defend the voluntary sector against unfair and unlawful funding cuts. We are currently seeking funding to establish a dedicated unit offering advice to voluntary sector groups and their users in relation to decisions affecting them made by public bodies. This has led to cases that kept six voluntary organisations in Leicester open, and saved a welfare benefits advice project in Cardiff. We have also advised Leicester Law Centre and other advice agencies in the area on potential public law challenges to their funding cuts.

We also operate an advice line for Human Rights and Public Law (Tel: 0808 808 4546) for solicitors and agencies with a Community Legal Service contract. The service offers consultancy and training support on a second tier basis to front line advisers, and acceptance of complex

case referrals. The line is open on Tuesday and Thursday 10.00am - 1.00pm and on Monday and Wednesday 2.00pm - 5.00pm.

Our research department is working on two projects - one on the effects of the procedural reforms relating to the permission stage on access to justice, the other (which is still at the fundraising stage) on the use of mediation in the administrative court. On the training side, following the success of last year's Judicial Review conference, PLP has decided to make this an annual event. This year's conference will take place on **12th October**. We are also currently developing a more extended programme of training conferences focusing on different areas of public law, which we see as an opportunity to develop our partnerships with potential client groups and other public law specialists.

More details on the conference, research and casework are available at www.publiclawproject.org.uk.

Our thanks to PLP for sending us this update.

Immigration News

Section 9 crises

Bury Law Centre has been at the forefront of media concern about the use of Section 9 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 2004 which is being piloted in three areas in England. Section 9 allows the NASS to order the eviction of failed asylum seekers and puts at risk children being separated from their parents and taken into care.

The Khanali family came to the UK two years ago claiming asylum because they were being persecuted in Iran by religious security forces. The couple have two daughters aged six and seven months. As with many others, the family's application for asylum was rejected. On the 5th of August the asylum appeal court ruled that NASS would have to reconsider the decision to withdraw benefits. However, the family still faced having their benefits withdrawn unless they co-operated with government left the UK voluntarily. A final appeal heard on 23rd August was dismissed. **John Richardson**, from Bury

Law Centre said after the refusal, *"It has been an inhumane process all the way through Section 9... we are shocked because we think this law not only is inhumane but also that the Home Office have carried it out in a wrong way and we would ask the Home Secretary to reconsider the whole pilot scheme."*

The British Association of Social Workers issued a press release in August deploring the implementation of Section 9. They said that, *"the possibility of children's social services removing children from their families as a result of Section 9 is incompatible with UK childcare legislation which upholds the fundamental right of all children to live with and be cared for by their parents. Local authorities have a duty under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need and their upbringing by their families."* They also quoted Article 9 of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, which says that children should only be removed from their families when it is in their best interests.

The Association of Greater Manchester Authorities has made a stand and are refusing to evict asylum seekers under Section 9. Bury Law Centre are making made representations to the Council to provide full care on the basis that it is legally required under section 17 of the Children Act.

The LCF supported the groundbreaking work of Bury Law Centre on the Section 9 pilot scheme in Manchester. Media coverage of the plight of their clients the Khanalis, the Sukulas, and Samina Altaf's family who faced destitution under Section 9 included *the Guardian, the Independent, the Manchester Evening News, Bolton Evening News, the Lancashire Times, Asian News, Inside Housing*, and interviews on Channel 4, Radio 5 Live, BBC Radio Bolton and BBC Radio Four.

Section 9 pilots are taking place in Greater Manchester, North London, Leeds and Bradford. At the end of August, 17 families had had benefits withdrawn and a further 70 are nearing the end of the process. An evaluation of the pilots is nearing an end - *hopefully it will end Section 9 actions.*

The Sukula family is also under threat in Bolton. If you would like to join their petition, visit : <http://www.wiredjungle.co.uk/sukula/>

Indefinite Leave

The granting of indefinite leave to remain to refugees ended on 30th August. As reported last month, a new Home Office policy of granting refugees limited leave of five years came into effect. It applies to all decisions to grant leave at the initial decision or following allowed appeals that were served from the 30th August onwards. During the five years a review may be triggered as a result of which the refugee may be expected to return to their country of origin. In certain circumstances there may also be a review at the end of the five year period. If there is no review during or at the end of the five year period, the refugee will be eligible to settle in the UK subject to passing English language and knowledge of life in the UK tests.

Any decision to curtail a person's leave or refusal of further leave will be appealable. The Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Bill provides for an in-country right of appeals against such decisions.

The information above was taken from the Law Society's Immigration Bulletin. The Law Society are developing an immigration email distribution list. Solicitors can join by forwarding an email address to : immigration@lawsociety.org.uk.

Children

The National Youth Advocacy Service has estimated that there are over 6,000 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in the UK and most have had the application for refugee status refused early on. NYAS is calling on the LSC to reconsider the requirements and limitations on the provision of legal advice for young people.

Managed Migration

The Home Office, CBI and TUC issued a joint commitment to support managed migration on 5th September. Among the commitments made by Government was a commitment to protect the legal rights of migrant workers and to support the recognition and accreditation of overseas qualifications wherever they match British standards. The CBI said it would promote integrated and diverse workforces, including

migrant workers and the TUC said it would provide migrant workers with information about their legal rights, promote equality of pay and conditions and harmonious relations between workers from different countries of origin and protect migrants from exploitation.

Keith Best the Chief Executive of the Immigration Advisory Service has warned that the proposals could lead to shortage of non skilled labour and he criticises the amount of bureaucracy involved. He suggests stripping the Skills Advisory Board of their role in advising Government on how many workers are needed in different sectors, arguing that this should be left to market forces.

The deadline for responses to the consultation paper, *"Making Migration Work for Britain"* is **7th November**.

Keith Best spoke out about the crisis of legal aid in immigration and asylum work at the Liberal Democrats conference. He said, *"All asylum seekers should receive free legal advice on making their claim. They should not be dispersed to areas where there are too few lawyers. Immigrations are among the most socially excluded of all our citizens yet the financial eligibility limits deny many of them publicly funded advice and representation. Unless the Government acts now the degree of social exclusion will increase even further."*

New Forms

The Immigration and Nationality Directorate issued a series of new application forms which have to be used from 15th September. They include indefinite leave, marriage, and extensions of stay. The forms can be downloaded from : www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/ind/en/home/applyin_g/application or you can call the Application Forms Unit on 0870 241 0645.

New Website

The Asylum and Immigration Tribunal has a new website www.ait.gov.uk. It contains information about how to pursue an appeal and information about procedures and hearing centres. It also has appeal forms and guidance notes.

Housing News

Unfair Terms

The Office of Fair Trading has published guidance on unfair terms in tenancy agreements. The guidance deals primarily with potential unfairness in assured and assured shorthold tenancy agreements. It applies to tenancy agreements made after 1st July 1995. The Regulations apply a test of fairness to most standard terms. Examples of unfair terms are given including those that :

- * exclude or limit the landlord's liability;
- * impose potentially excessive penalties on tenants for failure to meet the terms of the contract;
- * enable the landlord to vary the terms of the contract, to impose new rules on the tenant or increase the rent at short notice.

The Guidance states that terms should be expressed fully, clearly and legibly and that terms that might disadvantage the consumer should be given appropriate prominence. Contracts should be drawn up in a way that respects consumers' legitimate interests.

The OFT shares enforcement powers, both under the Regulations themselves and under the Enterprise Act, with a range of other enforcers. Consumers are able to use the Regulations to protect themselves from unfairness and take action to challenge the terms. The Guidance says that the court is the ultimate arbiter of whether a term is unfair.

Copies of the guidance can be found on the OFT website: www.offt.gov.uk/publications/reports

Licensing in the Private Rented Sector

Following consultation last year, the Government has announced that they intend to introduce HMO Licensing. Some of the proposals include:

- * the threshold for mandatory licensing will apply to HMOs comprising of three or more persons (comprising of at least two households);

- * the definition of 'storeys' will include basements and attics;
- * management regulations will apply to all HMOs, whether licensed or not;
- * national minimum amenity standards will be set that will enable authorities to ensure that the number of occupants will be set.

Further information from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister website: www.odpm.gov.uk.

Tackling Homelessness amongst Ethnic Minority Households

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister published a development guide this month to help local authorities change and develop their services in order to meet the varying needs of their ethnic minority communities. The paper sets out principles and gives practical guidance on a number of areas, including :

- * designing homelessness strategies that take account of the needs of ethnic minority people;
- * developing specialist ethnic minority services;
- * preventing homelessness amongst ethnic minority communities; and
- * tackling racial harassment.

Copies are available on the ODPM site. To coincide with the launch of the new guidance, the ODPM announced a £3 million fund to help local authorities tackle homelessness within ethnic minority groups. The Ethnic Minorities Innovation Fund will provide financial support to voluntary and community groups working in partnership with local authorities. The fund is a strand of the Homelessness Innovation Fund announced in June 2005.

Shelter Campaign

Shelter has launched a new campaign to stem rising homelessness among young people. A study found that almost half of young people aged 16 -25 do not know where to turn when they face housing problems. Shelter has set up a new website for young people and offers practical and legal advice on tenants' rights and

dealing with rogue landlords. It has targeting information for care leavers and students. The website will be accompanied by a three year Know Your Rights campaign. The website address is : www.shelter.org.uk/knowyourrights.

LCF Housing Working Party

**Wednesday, 19th October
2.30 p.m.**

at

LCF Offices, 18 Warren Street, London W1

All welcome....

Employment News

Age Discrimination

The DTI's Research Unit has published an investigation to employment practices and found that most organisations were aware, at a relatively low level, of age issues, and of the pending legislation. Few had any formal policies. There were a number of specific areas of employment where age discrimination was likely to be an issue:

- * the trend in recruitment was towards 'age blind' procedures, and few case study organisations included age on application forms;
- * pay was rarely directly age-related, except for workers under 20, but half the organisations had incremental pay scales, which tended to favour older workers.

Most of the case study organisations were already undergoing some kind of change. Preparation for age discrimination legislation was seen either as a minor issue, or something that could wait until the regulations.

The closing date for comments on the Government's draft regulations on age discrimination is **17th October** with the new legislation coming into force on 1st October 2006. See the July edition of *Networking for details*.

Flexible Working

The Equal Opportunities Commission has completed a major investigation into flexible and part time working and has called on government to :

- * extend the right to request flexible working to all *"to halt this waste of potential and to stop the economic and human damage caused by work-related stress"*;
- * enable training and advice for managers on how to manage flexible employees, with free or subsidised training for small businesses;
- * provide a financial incentive for small employers to open up flexible working.

With 7.4 million, Britain has the second highest proportion of part-time workers in the EU. 78% of these are women. Women working part-time earn on average 40% less per hour than men working full-time. The report shows that awareness of the right to request flexible working is not yet high enough. 82% of respondents in an ICM poll said that the right to request flexible working should be extended to all parents and carers.

Britain's Hidden Brain Drain is the final report from EOC on flexible working. An interim report was published last February.

ACAS - three year plan

The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service has published its new corporate plan. It includes :

- * acas' role in improving productivity and performance, in particular the launch of The Acas Model Workplace and proposals for a national workforce development programme;
- * initiatives Acas is taking forward to respond to the demand for information and advice that is independent and impartial as well as authoritative;
- * the significance Acas is attaching to managing diversity.

Disability Rights

Advising disabled employers (Direct Payment users)

The **Disability Rights Working Party** - the Law Centre Federation's committee dealing with disability issues - believe that there is a serious policy failing around the issue of how to deal with employment disputes between disabled people and their carers where the former employ the latter.

The issue is less serious for the wealthy disabled person who can pay for legal services from private practice solicitors from their own pocket, if need be. The less well off, who rely on disability benefits for their income and who benefit from the Direct Payment system to pay for their carers, can find themselves unable to find any affordable source of quality advice and representation.

Direct Payment is an empowering scheme which is paid by Councils (Social Services Departments) to disabled individuals, (subject to being assessed as needing Direct Payment in their community care assessments) in order to give them the autonomy, independence and choice in meeting their social, domestic, transport, personal and communication needs. Under the Direct Payment scheme, disabled individuals can employ from one part time carer to as many as 15 carers or combine directly employing regular staff and hiring care staff from a private care agency.

Inevitably however, although many highly satisfactory and long term relationships between disabled employers and carer (as employee) evolve, there are inevitably cases where there is a falling out and where either side may turn to their rights under employment legislation.

Where does the disabled employer get his/her legal service? The Disability Rights Working Party has learned that many disabled employers cannot access free legal advice about their roles and responsibilities in striving to be good, fair employers. If free legal advice, support and representation were made available, this could prevent disputes from escalating out of control and reduce the number of disabled employers threatened by being taken to an Employment Tribunal, a process they probably cannot afford.

We are aware of the problems with anyone getting employment advice, the geographical provision of which is patchy and getting worse.

The employee at least has the better options. They can turn to all of the legal service providers with an employment contract from the Community Legal Service. Employers have fewer options as many providers do not act for both employers and employees, generally preferring the latter.

Law Centres, for example, tend to act only for employees because where there is a chance of a conflict of interest it is better to act for the many - employees - rather than the few - their employer. Employees are almost always more vulnerable than their bosses and generally don't have the financial resources that their employer has to pay for legal services.

Unfortunately, where the employer is a disabled person the vulnerability equation does not favour the employee. Nor will the employer be likely to have more resources or power than their carer. If agencies have policies of advising employees instead of employers then that can leave recipients of Direct Payment, (a benefit that does not have provision for legal services factored into it) high and dry.

The Disability Rights Working Party would like to make Law Centres aware of a possible opportunity to develop a new project to meet this gap in service provision. Direct Payment is meant to cover the costs of employing someone but in fact it does not. Every employer should be aware that there are 'personnel' costs beyond the wage bill.

These costs may include settling disputes but more often include common costs such as redundancy payments. If, after two years of employment, the employee is dismissed because of the employer's changing needs, the employee is entitled to redundancy pay. Social Services maintain these costs when they employ the carer. As it was foreseeable that disabled users of Direct Payments would from time to time have such costs, why does this scheme not include an element to cover them?

As providers of legal services, Law Centres have a role to play in dealing with disputes and those costs could be managed either by adding

to the Direct Payment an amount for premiums to pay for legal services, or by direct provision of those services. And that is where the Law Centre movement might come in.

The Disability Rights Working Party suggests that there could be a country-wide statutory or voluntary organisation to provide specialist advice to disabled people as employers on employment, personnel, financial and contracting issues and feedback social policy issues on Direct Payment to Central and Local Government.

Should Law Centres take on disabled employer's cases in the Direct Payment Scheme? Join the Disability Rights Working Group's discussion at the Law Centres Federation's Annual Conference on Friday, 11th November at the Jurys Hotel in Birmingham. For more information contact Emma at 020 7387 8570

Our thanks to Teresa Waldron from Chesterfield Law Centre for her work on this issue on behalf of the Disability Rights Working Group.

Office for Disability Issues

David Blunkett, Secretary of State at the Department for Work and Pensions announced this month that a new Office for Disability Issues will be established later this year. The Unit is to *"drive action and delivery across the whole of Government and linking the work of the Disability Rights Commission in ensuring equality across society."*

New DRC Consultation

The Disability Rights Commission is consulting on a draft Code of Practice. The draft Code revises the current Code to Part 3 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 to reflect changes coming into effect in December 2006. These changes affect :

- * public authorities, some of whose functions had previously not been covered by the Act;
- * private clubs;
- * the housing sector, with new duties being placed on those letting, controlling and managing property.

From December 2006, landlords will have to make reasonable adjustments to their policies, practices and procedures, and provide auxiliary aids and services, when requested to by a disabled person.

The consultation lasts until **14th November**, Information on www.drc-gb.org/thelaw.

Definition of Disability

The Department for Work and Pensions is consulting on "*guidance on matters to be taken into account in determining questions relating to the definition of disability.*" The paper looks at the main elements of the definition of disability looking at the meaning of 'impairment', mental illness and exclusions. Section B considers the meaning of 'substantial adverse effect', the cumulative effects of an impairment, effects of behaviour, environment and treatment and progressive conditions. Section C looks at 'long-term effect', the meaning of 'likely' and recurring or fluctuating effects. The final section considers normal day-to-day activities and lists 'capabilities'. There is a questionnaire at the end. The consultation ends on **31st October**. The paper can be found at www.dwp.gov.uk/consultations/2005.

Care Services

The Office of Fair Trading has published a report highlighting the problems experienced by many older people who are considering moving into a care home. The Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) has set out a number of new initiatives now underway to address concerns. They accept that people need reliable information about a home before they make a decision to live there. The CSCI therefore will make sure it's inspection reports are widely available and signposted to the people who need that information. The CSCI will work with local councils and other bodies to ensure they help publicise the availability of CSCI guidance and information about registered care services and published inspection reports. They also accept that every person moving into a home should be given the most recent inspection report, and all residents should have a chance to participate in any new inspection that is carried out and see the subsequent report.

The CSCI supports the OFT finding that the information people are given about their entitlements, and about what their fees will pay for, is sometimes not clear enough. The Committee intends to take action to remedy this and are producing a new leaflet about how to complain about the services they receive.

Funding News

The Big Lottery

The Big Lottery has announced that it will give out £2.3 billion between 2006-2009 and have published their new programmes for England. Each programme has three key themes :

- * supporting community learning and creating opportunity;
- * promoting community safety and cohesion;
- * promoting well-being.

These are supported by four outcomes:

- * people having better chances in life, with better access to training and development to improve their life skills;
- * stronger communities, with more active citizens working together to tackle their problems;
- * improved rural and urban environments;
- * healthier and more active people and communities.

The programmes are divided into two broad areas: demand-led and strategic. There is a new programme for **Advice Services** with a budget of £50 million which will be launched by June 2006. The programme will have three aims:

- * improving the infrastructure of advice services;
- * strategic service delivery; and
- * local innovation, planning and partnership.

Getting advice services recognised by the Lottery has been a big breakthrough and the

LCF contributed to making the case along with other members of the Advice Services Alliance. Three new funding opportunities have been announced this month: funding from CRE and two funds for Debt work.

CRE - Getting Results

The CRE has set out a new policy framework for funding organisations under section 44 of the Race Relations Act. The priority areas have been developed to offer flexibility to enable applicants to cater for particular needs and demands. The priorities for 2006-07 are :

- * integration;
- * inter-community conflict prevention and resolution; and
- * support for victims of racial discrimination and harassment including legal casework.

CRE add that across these priority areas, they welcome applications for projects which focus on young people.

Support for victims of race discrimination include:

- * casework relating to discrimination complaints capable of being litigated under the RRA;
- * race specific casework relating to complaints not capable of being litigated; and
- * race specific generic support work for victims of race discrimination and/or racial harassment which does not involve pre-litigation or litigation activity.

A larger proportion of CRE funding will be allocated to casework relating to discrimination complaints capable of being litigated under the RRA. They are particularly interested in projects that represent complainants at employment tribunals at both interlocutory and full hearings.

Examples of race-specific casework not capable of being litigated under the RRA are given.

These include matters relating to :

- * the criminal offence of harassment where the race of the client is a factor;
- * any other racially aggravated offences;
- * immigration where the race of the client is a factor; or
- * asylum where the race of the client is a factor.

Information is on the CRE website: www.cre.gov.uk/about/gettingresults. You can also call 0845 600 1404 or email gettingresults@cre.gov.uk.

This year the CRE have decided that organisations "*should tailor their funding applications to their demonstrable capacity to deliver.*" Organisations can generally only apply for one outcome to the maximum of £33,500, or a maximum of three outcomes to a maximum funding request of £100,000. Application forms are on the CRE website.

The closing date for applications is **4th November 2005**.

Money Advice Outreach Pilots

The Treasury has set up a Financial Inclusion Fund to support initiatives to tackle financial inclusion. The Department for Constitutional Affairs will receive £6 million spread over three years to pilot and evaluate methods of money advice outreach in England and Wales. The advice should cover welfare benefits and debt and advisers should have a minimum of two years experience of advice in these areas. Applicants must show why the area to be covered is one of high financial exclusion and services should ink in with the strategic plans developed by Local Strategic Partnerships.

The closing date for applications is 12 noon on **30th September**. The pilots will commence not later than winter 2005/06 and will end on 31st March 2008.

Further information on the Legal Services Commission website: www.legalservice.gov.uk/aboutus/jobs/appointments or call CLS Policy Team on 020 7759 1446.

Face-to-Face Debt Advice Project

The Department for Trade and Industry has also announced a new funding stream for Debt advice. The funding is to be split over a two year period - £15 million in 2006-07 and £30 million in 2007-08. On 20th September the DTI launched a competition for funding and is seeking in particular proposals from **partnerships** of advice providers. The closing date for those interested in seeking grant support is **10th October**. On 31st October the DTI will reply with an assessment of whether the draft proposal is likely to be a contender. A full bid application then has to be made by 20th January 2006. Information is on the DTI website: www.dti.gov.uk/ccp/topics1/debtadvice. The site includes the criteria, a fact sheet and frequently asked questions which refers to the Money Advice Trust's website, "*wiseradviser*" www.wiseradviser.org. The DTI Enquiry Unit's number is 020 7215 5000.

National Coalfields Programme

The Government has just announced an additional £20 million to expand the number of areas eligible for regeneration funding under the Programme.

Information on the English Partnership website: www.englishpartnerships.co.uk.

Change Up

The Home Office had given £16.5m for six Change Up hubs of expertise over the next two years. The hubs will act as beacons of best practice and provide strategic leadership for the voluntary and community sector. Each hub is dedicated to a specific area: Performance Improvement; Workforce Development; Governance; Information and Technology; Financial VCS activity and Recruiting and Developing Volunteers.

The investment is part of the £80m being invested by Government to deliver Change Up programmes. 65% is being invested at local and regional level. The ICT hub has been allocated funding of £4m and the other five hubs have each been allocated approximately £2.5m for 2005/06 and 2006/7.

Shorts

Human Rights Awards 2005

The Law Society, Liberty and Justice are calling for nominations for their annual Human Rights Awards. There is the Human Rights Lawyer of the Year Award, the Human Rights Award for organisations and non-legal individuals and The Peter Duffy Award for individuals (campaigners, lawyers, activist, etc.) aged 35 or under. Nominations need to be in by **8th November** and should be emailed to awards@justice.org.uk.

Judicial Review

Following the reforms arising from 'New Focus for Civil Legal Aid', several changes have been made to the funding of judicial review cases:

- * Guidance on devolved powers has been amended to specify that suppliers should not grant emergency funding on the grounds of public interest - such cases should go to the Commission.
- * The LSC has changed the presumption of funding to ensure that alternative funding can always be considered by the Commission.
- * ADR should always be considered in judicial review proceedings. At the outset, the availability of complaint procedures must be taken into account. Once permission is granted mediation should be considered.

The budget for Very High Cost Cases has been reduced and new guidance has been published on priorities.

Equality Bill

The Bill has had its First and Second Readings and has gone through the Committee stage in the House of Lords. The Report stage will be on 19th October before the Bill goes to the Commons. If the Bill is introduced in the Commons in mid-November, Royal Assent could be expected as early as next spring in time for the setting up of the Equality and Human Rights Commission in October.

Forced Marriages

The Government is considering introducing legislation to create a specific criminal offence relating to forced marriages. The consultation sets out both the potential advantages and disadvantages and offers options for how a new offence might be framed and enforced.

Forced Marriage - A Wrong not a Right is on the Home Office website: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/comrace/race/forcedmarriage and at www.fca.gov.uk.

The closing date for comments is **5th December 2005**.

Anti Terror Bill

Government published the Bill on 15th September. Clause 19 of the Bill extends the maximum period of detention from 14 days to 3 months and creates a new offence of glorifying terrorism. **Shami Chakrabarti**, Director of Liberty said, *"There may be some measures in this Bill worthy of constructive scrutiny, but as currently drafted, it would reintroduce internment and make loose talk a serious criminal offence. Both measures are as dangerous to our freedoms as to our safety."*

The Joint Committee of Human Rights has announced a new inquiry into counter-terrorism policy and human rights and has called for evidence. Evidence needs to be in by 14th October.

Welfare Benefits review

The Department for Work and Pension has said that they will publish a Green Paper next month to simplify and streamline the system. David Blunkett MP, Secretary of State at the DWP said that the purpose was not to cut benefits. Incapacity benefit is being targeted and it is expected that claimants will be expected to attend work-focused interviews with personal advisers.

A two-tier system could be introduced with higher benefits for those actively seeking work and lower rates for those who do not.

Tax Credits Shambles

The Public Accounts Committee has said the system is unsatisfactory, and has revealed that almost one million taxpayers' records were incorrectly deleted between 1997 and 2000. The incorrect deletion resulted in 364,000 taxpayers receiving £82 million to which they were not entitled and 22,000 others not paying £5 million of the tax owed. The Department for Work and Pensions said in June that a third of tax credit claimants (1.8 million) had been overpaid in 2003-04.

The **Child Poverty Action Group** (CPAG) has written to Inland Revenue threatening legal action unless they change the way they recover overpayments from tax credits claimants. Currently the Revenue recovers overpayments automatically – CPAG believes the Revenue should give claimants a chance to say why an overpayment should not be recovered from them before they start to claw the money back.

Miners Compensation Scheme

Miners who developed vibration white finger or lung disease as a consequence of their employment are entitled to a refund of any contributions they have made towards legal aid costs if their claims are covered by either of the two Government compensation schemes.

Data Protection and Employees

A consolidated and updated version of the Employment Practices Data Protection Code has been published. It covers recruitment and selection, employment records, monitoring at work and information about worker's health. The code takes into account the Court of Appeal's decision in *Durant v Financial Services Authority* which found that information is not rendered "personal data" simply because it names an individual. Instead personal data is defined as *"information which is about a living person and affects that person's privacy in the sense that the information has the person as its focus or is otherwise biographical in nature."*

Our thanks to Sinclair Taylor & Martin for this news item in their monthly legal update. Updates can be viewed on their website: www.russell-cooke.co.uk.

Civil Partnerships

The Civil Partnership Act 2004 will come into force on **5th December**. The Partnerships are new legal relationship which can be registered by two people of the same sex and give couples legal recognition.

Rights and responsibilities for civil partners include:

- * a duty to provide reasonable maintenance for the partner and any children;
- * ability to apply for parental responsibility for a partner's child;
- * equitable treatment for the purposes of assessment for child support, life assurance, tax, employment and pension benefits and inheritance of a tenancy agreement;
- * recognition under intestacy rules;
- * protection from domestic violence and
- * recognition for immigration and nationality purposes.

People who wish to give notice of a civil partnership and who are subject to immigration control will have to demonstrate to the registrars that they hold either :

- * entry clearance granted to register a civil partnership;
- * the written permission of the Secretary of State;
- * settled status in the UK.

Written permission from the Secretary of State will take the form of a Certificate of Approval. To qualify applicants will need to have been granted over six months leave in the UK and at least three months of leave must be remaining. The IND intends to allow applicants to apply for certificates of approval and entry clearance for registering a civil partnership before 5th December.

Two non-EEA citizens may register a civil partnership in the UK as long as they have been granted a 'civil partnership visit visa' in order to give notice.

More information can be found on the Women and Equality website at: www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk/lgbt/partnership.

Tribunals Service

The Department for Constitutional Affairs has announced that the Criminal Injuries Compensation Appeals Panel and the Appeals Service which resolves disputes on matters like social security, child support cases and disability living allowance will join the Tribunals Service in April 2006. They will join the Employment Tribunals and the Special Education Needs and Disability Tribunal. The Tribunals Service has its own website: www.tribunalservice.gov.uk.

Reform of Public Sector Ombudsmen

The Cabinet Office has published a consultation to enable the three main public sector Ombudsmen - the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the Health Service Ombudsman and the Local Government Ombudsman - to work collaboratively together on cases. The proposals include the provision of express powers to issue advice and guidance on good administrative practice and other matters. It also proposes giving Ombudsmen express powers to seek the resolution of a complaint, in addition to, or instead of, conducting a formal investigation into the complaint. It will amend the Local Government Ombudsman's powers to allow investigation of some cases not first referred to local authorities.

Comments are requested by **18th November** and should be sent to Sally Pugh at the Cabinet Office. She can be contacted on 020 7276 2472 or via email: ombudsmenreform@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk

Charity Commission

The Charity Commission has changed its main contact number. The new number - 0845 3000 218 - will charge people at local rate, rather than national rate. Minicom users can contact the Commission on 0845 3000 219. Calls to the former number will be automatically redirected.

Conferences

Human Rights Law Conference 2005 - In good health or on the danger list ? - Assessing the Human Rights Act five years on. Conference organised by Justice, Thomson and Sweet & Maxwell and taking place on *26th October* at Church House, Westminster. £145.00 plus VAT. Information on 020 7393 7859.

Discrimination at Work: A 'hands on' casework day taking place on *25th October* at the Resource Centre in London. The conference is free and will provide practical help and support for when the age discrimination legislation comes into force and the Commission for Equality and Human Rights is established. The conference is organised by Help the Aged in its role as UK co-ordinator of Justice in your Job - a group working towards improving access to discrimination advice. Information on 020 7843 1560. Bookings need to be made by 3rd October via email: tina.chignoli@helptheaged.org.uk.

Anti-Social Behaviour - In search of Solutions Day event organised by the Centre for Crime and Justice Studies in London on *1st November*. £165.00. Information on 020 7848 1688 or visit: www.kcl.ac.uk/ccjs.

Refugee Children: Safeguarding the future of those hardest to protect Conference organised by the Refugee Council and taking place on *20th October* in London and again in York on 9th November. Professor Al Aynsley-Green, Children's Commissioner will be speaking in London and Naomi Eisenstadt, Director of Sure Start in York. Supported Rate is £100. Information on 020 7346 6739 or visit : www.refugeecouncil.org.uk.

Gypsies, Travellers and the Settled Community - Tackling community tensions and creating dialogue, understanding and partnership Speakers include Julie Morgan MP, Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group, Travellers Law Reform and Sarah Spencer from CRE. The conference takes place on *15th November* at Friends Meeting House in London. £100.00 plus VAT. Telephone 0870 351 8720 or visit: www.policyspotlight.co.uk.

'In the Life' conference: A strategic Approach to the Inclusion of Older Lesbians, Gay Men and Bisexuals. Conference taking place on *28th October* at the London Voluntary Sector Resource Centre. Conference organisation by Polari and Better Government for Older People. Information on 020 7255 4480 or 020 7843 1552.

Quality Matters The Legal Aid Practitioners Group are holding their conference on *7th October* in Birmingham. It costs £150 for LAPG members. Information on 020 7960 6068.

Fundraising Conference organised by the Directory of Social Change on *20th October* at the Charity Centre in London. For organisation with a turnover of over £500,000 the cost is £175.00. Information on 08450 77 77 07 or visit: training@dsc.org.uk.

Charity Management: Conference Revisited 2005 Conference organised by DSC and taking place on *6th October* in London. £175.00.

Training

Housing Act, Housing Law Reform, Recent Housing Law Developments, Recent Homelessness Developments are four seminars run by Shelter taking place on various dates and locations. Fee: £69.00. Shelter provide a wide range of training including Prisoners' Housing Rights, Asylum, Refugees and Housing Rights, Housing Cases in the County Court and Young People, Housing and Homelessness.

For Law Centres, one day's training costs either £124.00 or £94 depending on location. Information on 020 7490 6720 or visit: www.shelter.org.uk/training.

Defending Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (6th October), **Support in the Community for those Suffering from Mental Disorder** (20th October) and **Supervision Skills in Civil Cases** (17th November). Examples of the range of training provided by Legal Action Group this autumn.

Visit: www.lag.org.uk for more information or call 020 7833 7473.

TUPE: The 2005 Makeover and Age Discrimination - the New Law. These are two of many new courses organised by Central Law Training and taking place at various locations. £190 plus VAT. Contracts of Employment: Case Tracking and Precedent Review is being presented by *Elaine Heslop* (ex Law Centre worker). CLT have also introduced a new CLT Certificate in Employment Law 1 and 2. You can complete Certificate 1 using distant learning. Fee £445 plus VAT for 1 and £190 plus VAT for 2. Telephone for more information on 0121 355 0900 or visit www.clt.co.uk. **When booking, please quote LCF Membership Number FSS 2242.**

Age Discrimination Seminars organised by 1 Temple Court and taking place on 5th October (Manchester), 18th October (Birmingham) and 31st October (London). The seminars start at 6.30p.m and last for two hours. Cost £62.50 plus VAT. Information from Gaye Spencer-King on 020 7842 8646.

Disability Alliance provides training on disability issues. They include Personal Capability Assessment Training on 18th October, Tax Credits on 6th and 27th October, the DLA and AA Appeals on 8th, 25th November and 5th December and Taking Cases to Commissioners on 6th December. For more information, contact the Training Unit on 020 7377 9881 or visit: www.disabilityalliance.org. Cost for members is £85.00 or £100 for non-members.

Advanced Workshop in Refugee Law organised by the Law Society Immigration Law Committee in association with Catriona Jarvis, Senior Immigration Judge. The workshop is presented by Prof. James Hathaway of the University of Michigan. It takes place on 21st November at the Law Society, 113 Chancery Lane, London. £185.38 plus VAT. The workshop will be followed by a reception at Garden Court Chambers.

Dealing with Debt ? The Birmingham Settlement provides a range of training and has just published their October to March 2006 programme. Per day, the training costs £95.00. Information call 0121 248 3000 or visit www.birminghamsettlement.org.uk.

Writing for the Web (11th October), **Managing Time and Workload** (12th October). Two of many courses provided the Centre for Strategy and Communication. One day courses cost £185.00 plus VAT. Information at 020 7490 3030 or visit: www.the-centre.co.uk.

Collaborative working in practice Training provided by NCVO in London, Leicester and Leeds in October and November. The fee for non members is £130.00. Information on 020 7520 2440.

'Outcome' Grants from the Big Lottery Fund. Training provided by the Directory of Social Change and taking place at alternative locations. DSC provides training on Fundraising, Management & Leadership, Strategy, Business, Planning & Finance, Law & Health & Safety, HR Management, Training & Development, Marketing and Media and Communication & Interpersonal Skills. New courses include The Secret Life of Teams, Managing Change, Managing Attendance and Coaching. For more information about training courses visit: www.dsc.org.uk.

MA/Postgraduate Diploma/Postgraduate **Certificate in Voluntary Sector Studies** Programme developed by the University of East London. It is possible to join the programme in late September or February 2006. Information from Mike Locke on 020 8223 4230 or email: m.locke@uel.ac.uk.

Books

Good Employment Guide for the Voluntary Sector published by NCVO. £25.00. The third edition of the Good Financial Management Guide is also published this month and also costs £25.00. Information on 0845 458 9910 or visit <http://shop.ncvo-vol.org.uk>.

Beyond the Courtroom: A Lawyers Guide to Campaigning by Katie Ghose and published by Legal Action Group. £20.00.

Telephone Helpline Directory 2006 Copies of edition of the directory will be available from 10th October from the Resource Information Service. £20.00. To order a copy call 020 7939 0641. Their website address is : www.ris.org.uk.

Making People Welcome: Sourcebook of Diversity published by the Directory of Social Change. It covers illness and disability, religion, nationality and demographics. £35.00. **Employment Records Handbook for Voluntary Organisations** is another book from DSC and costs £14.95. A new edition of **Just About Managing** by Sandy Adirondack was also published this month and costs £25.00. Postage and packing is extra.

Books can be ordered on 08450 77 77 07 by via email: publications@dsc.org.uk or online: www.dsc.org.uk.

ECAS - European Citizen Action Service has published a **Funding Guide** on accessing Europe's largest donors.

Visit www.ecas.org/Publications for more information. 39.

Citizens Advice Handbook Published by Penguin and costing £12.00.

Black Lawyers Directory



BLD
BLACK LAWYERS DIRECTORY
highlighting and promoting diversity in law

ABOUT THE DIRECTORY
The Black Lawyers Directory is the UK's online directory of Black and Ethnic Minority lawyers and the organisations where they work, whether in private practice, commerce and industry, the public sector, academic institutions or other organisations.

For your free listing or to advertise in the directory you can:

- Visit us at www.blacklawyersdirectory.com
- Email us at info@blacklawyersdirectory.com
- Fax us at +44 (0)20 8509 2731
- Telephone us at +44 (0)20 8509 2731

YOUR FIRST CONTACT
As the listing is free, please help us to keep our overheads down by first visiting our website or emailing us in the first instance.

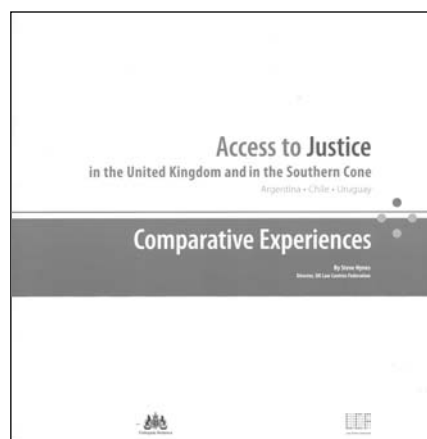
The Black Lawyers Directory is online and includes a list of Black and Ethnic Minority lawyers and the places they work.

Visit www.blacklawyersdirectory.com for further information

Reports and Guidance

Evaluating Community Projects: A Practical Guide Guidelines produced by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. The Guide includes a step-by-step approach to evaluation and sample tables and record sheets. Email contact info@jrf.org.uk.

Access to Justice in the United Kingdom and in the Southern Cone: Comparative Experiences New publication written by the LCF and published in Argentina following a visit by LCF director, Steve Hynes in November 2004. If you would a copy please contact Lynn at the LCF office via lynn@lawcentres.org.uk



Regional Planning and its Limitations by Adam Griffith at the Advice Services Alliance. The paper considers the LSC's Regional plans over previous year. It looks at the categories of law and client groups, prioritisation and other ways of meeting demand. The paper concludes that it maybe that we need less planning! *"The RLSCs may need to step back a little and let providers make decisions within a broad framework. The RLSCs role could then be to oversee what is done - checking that obvious gaps and need are not being missed. They might then need to negotiate with providers or other funders to make sure that these gaps and needs are filled as much as possible."* Information on ASA's website: www.asauk.org.uk

Code of Good Governance for the Third Sector A new guide from ACEVO - the Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations. Copies are available at : www.governancehub.org.uk.

1+1=3 Does size really matter ? Collaborative working between large and small voluntary and community organisations. This and Sharing back office services: A model of collaborative working has been published by NCVO's Collaborative Working Unit. The Unit can be contacted on 020 7520 2440 or email collaborate@ncvo-vol.org.uk. Also see *training*.

Networking..

Target Setting - A Practical Guide Published by the Audit Commission and IDeA. The Guide includes a target setting checklist.

New guidance on unfair terms in holiday caravan agreements has been issued by the Office of Fair Trading together with a leaflet for caravan owners.

Tenancy Deposits Implements - Scoping Study Report published by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. The report recommends that the ODPM establish a separate ADR scheme.

Immigration Asylum and Nationality Bill 2005: Key Issues and Concerns. The refugee has published a new Briefing about the Bill. Copies can be found on the Council's website: www.refugeecouncil.org.uk.

Rights at Risk - Older People and Human Rights Report by Help the Aged. The Report finds that existing human rights legislation is failing some of the country's most vulnerable older people. *"This is because the great majority of older people's services - including over 90% of care home places and nearly 70% of domiciliary care hours - are contracted out to the private sector."* The Report costs £5.00 and can be obtained by calling 020 7239 1946.

Tackling Over-Indebtedness Annual Report published by the DTI last month. The report sets out how Government and partners are addressing the issue of problem debt. The launch included future plans for action.

To keep up to date with the Face-to-Face Debt Advice Project, visit: www.dti.gov.uk/ccp/topics1/debtadvice. See *Funding News* for more information.

Greater Expectations Final Report of the EOC's investigation into discrimination against new and expectant mothers in the workplace. The report recommends that the capacity of existing services to offer advice and support should be increased and that there should be greater investment in the transfer of expertise from bodies such as the EOC to HR advisers and legal advisers.

'Standing Problem' A new report from the TUC that says that up to 11 million UK workers could face serious health problems from prolonged standing at work. Visit www.tuc.org.uk for a copy.

Trainers and Consultants Direct New publication from NACVS which offers advice and guidance on appointing a trainer or consultant. Visit www.trainersandconsultantsdirect.org.uk.

Leaflets

Using Your Rights The Disability Rights Commission has produced new step-by-step guides for people who have been discriminated against in the workplace. It includes one about taking cases to employment tribunals.

Hire Purchase Leaflet The Office of Fair Trading has published a new leaflet for clients on HP agreements. It also covers Conditional Sale agreements.

It is available from their website : www.offt.gov.uk or by calling 0800 389 3158

CD-ROM

Law Centre (Northern Ireland) has launched an **Encyclopaedia of Rights**, a new user-friendly CD-ROM of social welfare law. The information is also available to the public through the Law Centre's website: www.lawcentreni.org.

The website version has been fitted with *Browsaloud*, a speech enabling tool which makes the site more accessible to people with mild visual impairments, dyslexia, literacy issues or for whom English is not their first language. Information from the Law Centre Director, Les Allamby or from their Publications Officer, Catherine Couvert on 028 9024 4401.

Workplace Bullying and Discrimination

Duty of Care (UK) Ltd has produced a training CD on Bullying for employees. It costs a hefty £285.00 plus VAT.

Contact number 0845 230 1464.
www.dutyofcare.biz.

New LSC Newsletter

About *Directions* is a new newsletter from the Legal Services Commission. The leading article is on the Community Legal Service - the next 5 years and it includes a two page section on "*Making Legal Rights a Reality*". This includes some "facts" about Community Legal and Advice Centres (CLACs) and Community Legal and Advice Networks (CLANs). An article on Housing Possession Court Duty Schemes says that the LSC is now expanding the scheme to more than 40 county courts across the country. The newsletter has been written for local authorities, government departments, primary care trusts and "other agencies that share a similar agenda to the CLS."

To join the mailing list, email : frances.malik@legalservices.gov.uk saying whether you would like to receive a paper copy or electronic copy. Frances can also be contacted on 020 7759 1446.

Jobs

Gateshead Law Centre® Solicitor or Caseworker

Following a Management change and as part of our expansion the "new" Gateshead Law Centre staffed by progressive, enthusiastic and friendly staff seek a Solicitor or Caseworker to work full time (35 hours per week) flexible.

We specialise in Housing, Welfare Benefits, Employment and Debt law, aimed at the most disadvantaged.

Application deadline: **5th October**
Salary: (Pt 29) £22,512 -
(Pt 42) £32,361 + Pension

Gateshead Law Centre is an equal opportunities employer.

Contact Gateshead Law Centre for an application pack on 0191 440 8570, or for an informal discussion telephone Robin Winder on 0191 440 8586 (Tuesday-Friday)

Chesterfield Law Centre® Housing Specialist - Solicitor/Advice Worker

This well established Law Centre providing free legal advice and representation to the rural and urban communities of North Derbyshire. You will have substantial and recent experience of carrying a housing caseload. This will include advising public and private sector tenants and on issues of homelessness as well as negotiation and court representation. You will be joining a strong, flexible team, committed to social justice and delivering high quality legal services. This full time post is open to job share applicants.

Application deadline: **10th October**
Salary: £25,437 qualified/ £21,654
(non qualified) with pension contribution

Chesterfield Law Centre is striving to be an equal opportunities employer and welcomes applications from all sections of the community. Previous applicants need not reapply

Contact Chesterfield Law Centre on 01246 550674 (voice) 01246 204570 (text phone) clc@chesterfieldlawcentre.org.uk. Or write to: Chesterfield Law Centre, 44 Park Road, Chesterfield S40 1XZ

North Manchester Law Centre® Managing Solicitor (Housing)

- * With at least three years PQE and management experience
- * Substantial experience of handling a wide range of housing cases including disrepair
- * Applicants must meet the LSC supervisor standards

Application deadline: **3rd October** / Interviews 11th October.
Salary: £30,747 - 35 hours per week (flexi time).
Final salary pension scheme and 30 days holiday
Applicants who wish to job share are welcome.

North Manchester Law Centre strives to be an equal opportunities employer.

Contact North Manchester Law Centre for an application pack on 0161 205 9031 or email info@nmlc.org.uk or write to : North Manchester Law Centre, Harpurhey District Centre, Manchester. M9 4DH

LCF Annual Conference

"Law is Local"

Jury's Hotel, 245 Broad Street, Birmingham B1

11th and 12th November 2005

Full Residential Rate: £130.00, Non-Residential Rate £90.00 and Day Rate £50.00 (plus VAT)

**Opening address by Bridget Prentice MP. Parliamentary Secretary,
Department for Constitutional Affairs**

Other Speakers include :

Alan Beith MP, Chair of the Constitutional Affairs Committee
John Fitzpatrick, Hammersmith & Fulham Law Centre
Ruth Hayes, Islington Law Centre
Rebecca Howard, Disability Rights Commission
Steve Hynes, Director, Law Centres Federation
Vivienne Kendrick, Kirklees Metropolitan Council
Andy King, Avon and Bristol Law Centre
Stella Manzie OBE, Chief Executive Coventry City Council
Lorraine I Thomas, Neighbourhood Renewal Unit at ODPM

There are 20 workshops offered. This year we are asking delegates to sign up for their workshops in advance. So, get your booking forms in early to avoid disappointment! Contact for bookings is Emma Reimer at emma@lawcentres.org.uk or you can call her on 020 7255 9590.

We are grateful to our supporters of this years conference: AON Insurance, DNA Bioscience, Independent Lawyer, Legal Action Group, LexisNexis Butterworth, Matrix Chambers and Mayers Brown Rowe & Maw.

LCF Staff

Noeleen Adams, London Unit Manager, **Victor Adetiba**, Finance Worker (P/T), **Jen Corlew**, Campaign and Communications Worker, **Lynn Evans**, Policy Manager, **Steve Hynes**, Director, **Metin Kemal**, Regional Development Manager, **Julian Lewis**, LawWorks Project Manager, **Minaxi Panchal**, London Training and Organisational Development, **Stella Russell**, Regional Development, **Emma Reimer**, Administrator.

Members of staff can be contacted by email by using their first name followed by @lawcentres.org.uk

Please let us know if you have news about your Law Centre:

**Staff Changes • New Initiatives • New Funding • Case Successes •
Meetings and AGMs**