

ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2018

Transforming Justice – Court Modernisation and Digital Exclusion

A conference for students, trainee solicitors and pupil barristers

International Dispute Resolution Centre
Saturday 3 February 2018

The UK Government White Paper *Transforming Our Justice System* (September 2016), and subsequently the introduction of the Prison and Courts Bill in the last Parliament, confirms the plans of the Ministry of Justice and senior judiciary to ‘automate and digitise the entire process of civil money claims by 2020’ and the ‘interactive triage’ role envisaged for litigants-in-person using the ‘Online Court’ for certain civil proceedings. Modernisation and digitisation – including greater use of online procedures and virtual hearings – will also extend to tribunals and criminal proceedings. Traffic offences are already dealt with online in most parts of the country.

This conference will give you the opportunity to meet the JUSTICE team and some experts in this field, as well as new practitioners, to discuss the future justice system. We will be running exciting and thought provoking workshops on some of the challenges of digitisation for people navigating the criminal, civil and immigration and asylum court processes.

You will also have the opportunity to hear about the experiences of our panel of junior lawyers and receive invaluable advice about the journey into legal practice. JUSTICE Director, Andrea Coomber, will end the day in conversation with leading senior practitioner, Alexandra Marks CBE, and you will have a chance to quiz her about her career.

As a delegate, you will:

- Discuss topical, cutting edge justice issues with leading practitioners.
- Gain a greater practical understanding of how the courts and tribunals are changing and what it might mean for your future in the law.
- Gain a unique insight into the workings of one of the country’s leading law reform and human rights organisations.
- Network with other students interested in careers in public interest law.
- Meet the JUSTICE team and explore crucial justice system debates.



Transforming Justice - Court Modernisation and Digital Exclusion

Saturday 3 February 2018 **PROGRAMME**

9.30 *Registration*

9.50 *Welcome*

Jodie Blackstock, Legal Director, JUSTICE

10.00 **Court reform and why it matters**

Key note address by Sir Robin Knowles,

Judge of the High Court of England and Wales.

He will cover court modernisation and its potential impact on young lawyers, drawing from his extensive experience.

Questions & Answers

11.00 *Coffee break*

11.15 **Morning Breakout Sessions**

(Choose one of the following three sessions)

1. Court Modernisation and Sexual Offences

Tariq Desai,

Lawyer, Criminal Justice, JUSTICE

When prosecuting sexual offences, it is often one person's word against another's, with little available evidence. The nature of the crime also means that many complainants are vulnerable, making the court experience incredibly difficult for them. Modernisation, such as pre-recorded evidence and video links may make prosecutions easier, but may raise also fair trial issues.

Join us to discuss the impact of court modernisation on the prosecution of sexual offences.

2. Transforming Immigration and Asylum

Sir Ross Cranston, London School of Economics

Sarah Looney, Legal Fellow, JUSTICE

The Reform Programme presents an opportunity to address flaws in the current system, such as the quality of Home Office decisions and the quality of legal representation. It also poses challenges. For example, can migrants effectively participate in hearings via video-link when they struggle with English and are unfamiliar with our legal system?

Help us improve the immigration and asylum system.

'The Student Network has really broadened my perspective on the wide range of opportunities available to law students.'

Samara Lawrence, GDL Graduate

3. Digital exclusion from 21st century justice?

Rachel Jones, Lawyer Civil Justice, JUSTICE

An 'Online Court' will be created for low-value money claims. Groups, such as the elderly who are unfamiliar with computers, people with learning difficulties who need support to understand, and illiterate people who cannot read webpages, risk being digitally excluded from this new court.

This workshop will discuss ways of ensuring vulnerable people are included.

12.30 *Lunch*

13.30 **Afternoon Breakout Sessions**

(Repeat of morning breakouts)

14.45 *Tea*

15.00 **Careers panel of new practitioners**

Ubah Dirie, 36 Bedford Row

Rachel Barrett, Cloisters

Matthew Fogg, Government Legal Service

Alastair Livesey, Clifford Chance

This session will give delegates the chance to quiz a panel of lawyers early in practice about building a career in the law. Our panel is drawn from a range of backgrounds and areas of practice and will give delegates hands on, practical advice on the various routes they may wish to consider in the legal sector.

16.00 **JUSTICE Director Andrea Coomber in conversation with Alexandra Marks CBE**

Delegates will get the opportunity to hear from **Alexandra Marks CBE** and her wide ranging legal career. She has been a partner at Linklaters, a deputy High Court Judge and Recorder (crime and civil) on the South Eastern Circuit. She is currently a Commissioner at both the Judicial Appointments Commission and the Criminal Cases Review Commission. She also chairs the Prisoners' Education Trust (PET) Board of trustees and is a Council member of JUSTICE. Alexandra will speak about her life in the law, the challenges it has presented and how she has navigated such a fascinating career.

Questions & Answers

17.00 *Close and thanks*

Andrea Coomber, Director, JUSTICE