

Suffolk Law Centre



Suffolk Law Centre Mission Statement

To provide legal services to help the diverse communities of Suffolk to gain equal Access to Justice, to challenge disadvantage and inequality, and to understand their legal rights, obligations and protections.

About our Front Cover:

Artist: Nate-Wayla

"The hands represent ISCRE ethos. The flower epitomises clients, who are misrepresented from different communities and in need of help and support which the staff at Suffolk Law Centre provide."

Team

STAFF

Director

Audrey Ludwig

Finance Director

Phanuel Mutumburi

Practice Manager

Sophie Hawkins

Finance Officer

Mayuri Patel

Business Development Officer

Sue Wardell

Information Officer

Letha Evelyn

LAC Triage Officer

Sumaiyah Jeelani

Discrimination Legal Adviser

Carol Ward

Trainee Solicitor

Pippa Banham

Discrimination Legal Adviser

Jonathan Parratt

Family Support Admin Officer

Fatima Ceesay

Family Support Project Lead

Carole Parry-Jones

Youth Justice Project Officer

Sharon O'Donnell



Trustees (almost the full suite!) at our 2018 AGM

TRUSTEES (at the time of publication)

Chair

Hamil Clarke MBE

Vice-Chair

Sue Raychaudri

Treasurer

Jeremy Lea

Secretary

Denise Bradshaw

Chris Cumberbatch

Louise Gooch

Albert Grant OBE

Bal Howard

Liz Pettman

Daisy Weekes

Dr. Sarita Rao (Feb. 19)

Garfield Hunt (June. 19)

“Absolutely compassionate and understanding of my situation, very patient. Informative advice given, I feel so much more informed. Thank you so much.” (Legal Advice Centre client)

Volunteers: (2018-19)

Thank you to all our volunteers. Those named below include law students from University of Essex, law graduates and local people. We hope we have included everyone who volunteered with us this year (but if we have missed anyone, we are very sorry).

Melanie Allen; Horia Azizi; Helen Bahrami; Julie Baker; Janice Bowdery; David Brown; Melisha Brown; Paul Burton; Fatima Ceesay;

Jack Child; Lindah Chimea; Sant Kaur; Rosemary Goulding; Richard Hinton; Esther Hui Hui Khor; Uma Hunagund; Prajwala Konda; Anna Lambert; Ingrid Malo; Liam McKenna; Lorenzo Mohanlal; Vivian Mushati; Sharon O'Donnell; Swee Eii Ong; Oritse-Mofe Onuwaje; Naomi Sheyerle; Rebecca Sillis; Sally Sohi; Abigail Ward; Jemima Wolstencroft; Anouska Wright

Legal Advice Clinic Volunteers

We could not run our Legal Advice Clinic without our rota of committed legal volunteers who give their time and lend their expertise to advise our clients. A number of local law firms provide us with many volunteers from their legal trainees – unfortunately we don't have room to list them all here. Below are regular and long-standing volunteers from the following law firms:

Ashtons - Helen Leggett; Roger Loomes

Attwells - Lloyd Clarke; Jamie Hercus

Bates Wells Braithwaite - Scott Emsden; Brenda Head

Birketts - Katie Beavan; Christina Wright; Sarina Bailey; Sue Butcher; Sarah Branwhite; Georgia Wright; James Humphreys (and others!)

East Anglian Chambers - Joanna Bradbury; Marcus Croskell; Jonathan Hasson; Nicholas Elcombe

Fenners Chambers - Robin Howard

Gotelee - Stevan Stratton; Annalise Shellcot

Immigration Legal Services - Angela Cole; Sallie Davies

Jackamans - Ruth Jenkins; Tim Owers

Kerseys - Adrian Green; Victoria Mead

Landmark Chambers - Alison Oakes

Prettys - Michael Booth; Louise Plant, and many legal trainees!

OISC Level 1 Immigration - Margaret Bulaitis; Chris Lewington; Sharon O'Donnell

Family Support Helpdesk - Sally Freeman; Krystyna Hayes; Sarah Langford; Chris Mattinson; Carole Parry-Jones; Carol Ward

'Pro Bono': free of charge (Latin: 'For the public good') #wedoprobono

"...because people need to know that someone does care and that someone will listen"

"...because justice should not only be available to those who can afford it"

"...because it feels right, it does good and it makes positive a difference"

Welcome: Chair, **Hamil Clarke MBE**

I am so proud to welcome you to Suffolk Law Centre's first Annual Report.

Read on, and you will find an impressive selection of Suffolk Law Centre's achievements over 2018-19. Members of staff, and some of our volunteers, share what they have been doing and projects they have been involved in. In total, we have helped over **2,300** people to be more aware of and to assert their legal rights.

We have reports on our flagship services: Tackling Discrimination in the East (TDE) and the Legal Advice Clinic. There are some very nice photos too! Most importantly, we have included some of the feedback that we received from clients who have come to us for advice and support on a whole range of legal issues.

So often, people turn to us when the problems they are dealing with become too big for them to manage alone. They seek our help because they need someone to make the law more accessible, to help them understand their rights and responsibilities, and guide them through the legal process. Sometimes, they just need the space to talk through their legal problem with an expert who is going to listen, who is going isn't going to charge them more

than they can possibly afford. All this and more, is what Law Centres do.

In our first operational year, we have faced some immediate challenges: We bid for, and were granted, our first ever legal aid contract – in housing. Whilst our core services were funded for 2018-19, we knew we would soon be reaching the end of our 3-year grants for both TDE and LAC. Thankfully, Audrey and her team have worked tirelessly on all these areas and more. Having been awarded a Housing Legal Aid contract for Suffolk, we really struggled to recruit a suitably qualified Housing Lawyer, but I am pleased to say that we expect to be in a position to take up the contract in September this year. We are thrilled that both National Lottery and Tudor Trust have fully endorsed our work and will continue to support us through to 2022.

When ISCRE's Trustees took the decision to set up Suffolk Law Centre, we knew the task in front of us was vast: We can't yet claim to have filled all the advice gaps in our region. But we are making really good progress towards meeting the legal advice needs of the most vulnerable.

We are Suffolk Law Centre.



Hamil at Suffolk Law Centre's 1st Anniversary. (L-R: Sue Wardell - Business Development Officer; Audrey Ludwig – Director; Hamil Clarke - Chair; Julie Bishop – Director, Law Centres' Network; Sarah Langford – Barrister, author and ex-volunteer).

Legal Advice Clinic (LAC): Sumaiyah Jeelani



Why I LIKE Mondays!

The **Legal Advice Clinic** is our weekly service offering free, half-hour legal advice appointments with a legal professional in these areas of law: **Family, Employment, Immigration,**

Housing, Personal Injury and General.

I have been working as the Legal Advice Clinic Triage Officer for 3 and half years now. The job is so varied (and busy) that I thought I'd share some of what a typical Monday morning can be like.

I'm usually at my desk around 8:45am to check answerphone messages left over the weekend. We open our doors at 9am. Whilst the main LAC is on Thursday evenings, we often have appointments booked on other days to manage out waiting lists. Monday mornings can mean an Employment legal advice appointment. The client arrives early so I show him our waiting area. Luckily, the lawyer arrives soon after.

I call a woman who has left an answerphone message requesting advice for her son about his housing issues. Her son is very vulnerable and has been threatened with eviction. Due to a cancellation, I fit in an appointment for them with a volunteer Barrister for next Thursday. Housing advice is in high demand, so this I am relieved I can offer her this appointment. I send her the forms and explain all the documents we will need to give him the right advice.

I start making calls to confirm Thursday's clinic appointments. This will take several days as I won't get through to everyone, so best to start early!

The LAC Employment appointment is finished, and the client hands me his feedback form; he is very pleased with the advice given and leaves a £5 donation. Donations from clients make a big difference as they help to support the LAC's running costs.

A man referred by Ipswich Citizen's Advice comes into reception with forms to send to Home Office; he wants them completed now. I check through forms to see what time limits there are. He speaks Romanian. I call the telephone interpreting service, as he is

clearly anxious; an interpreter is put on the line and speaks to the client to explain situation. Once he understands, he wants to book the appointment, so I arrange this with the interpreter, completing the appointment form over the phone with the client.

I take a phone call concerning a child access issue. We have a long waiting list. She has a court date next week at Ipswich Magistrates' Court and no legal representation as she cannot afford it and is not eligible for legal aid. I tell her that we run a **Helpdesk at the court on Family Day** where she can get advice before she goes into court on what to expect, and then again after the hearing, to help her understand what has happened. She is so relieved to hear this, and I advise her where the Helpdesk is located. I also let her know about our **Family Support Clinic** to people with no legal representation with completing court forms, and that the adviser at court can refer her to this if she needs further help. She seems much happier and more confident about next week's court hearing now she knows that she can speak to a legal expert before court.

I open the post which arrived whilst I was on that call. I glance up at the clock – time for lunch!

How we made a difference:

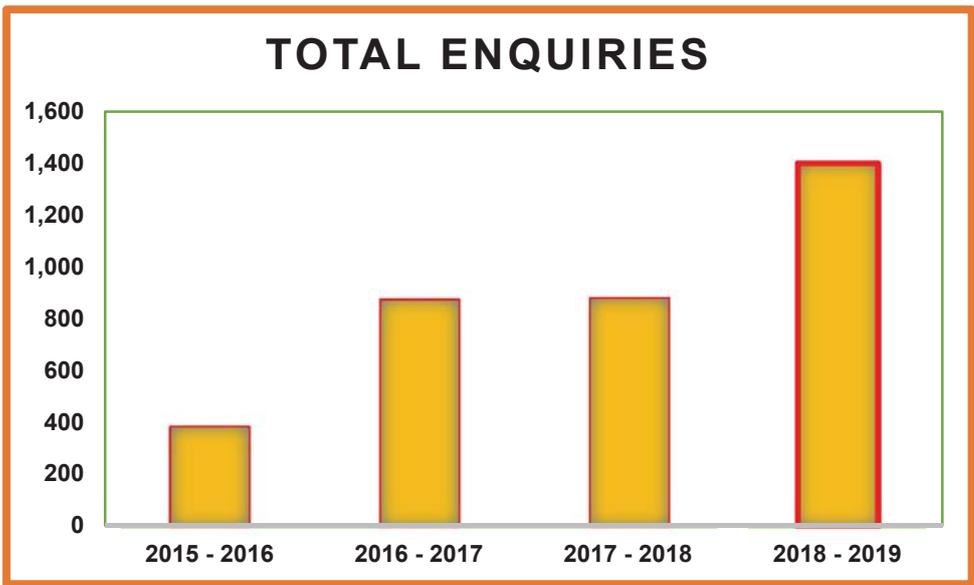
For National Pro Bono Week, we ran an extra day of family, housing, immigration and general advice appts

99% of the clients found our services accessible and easy to use

100% of clients said the advisor treated them with respect and sensitivity and clearly explained their options

87% of the clients rated the help they received as Very Good

“A crucial service that is invaluable for under-represented people and groups in the community.” LAC client



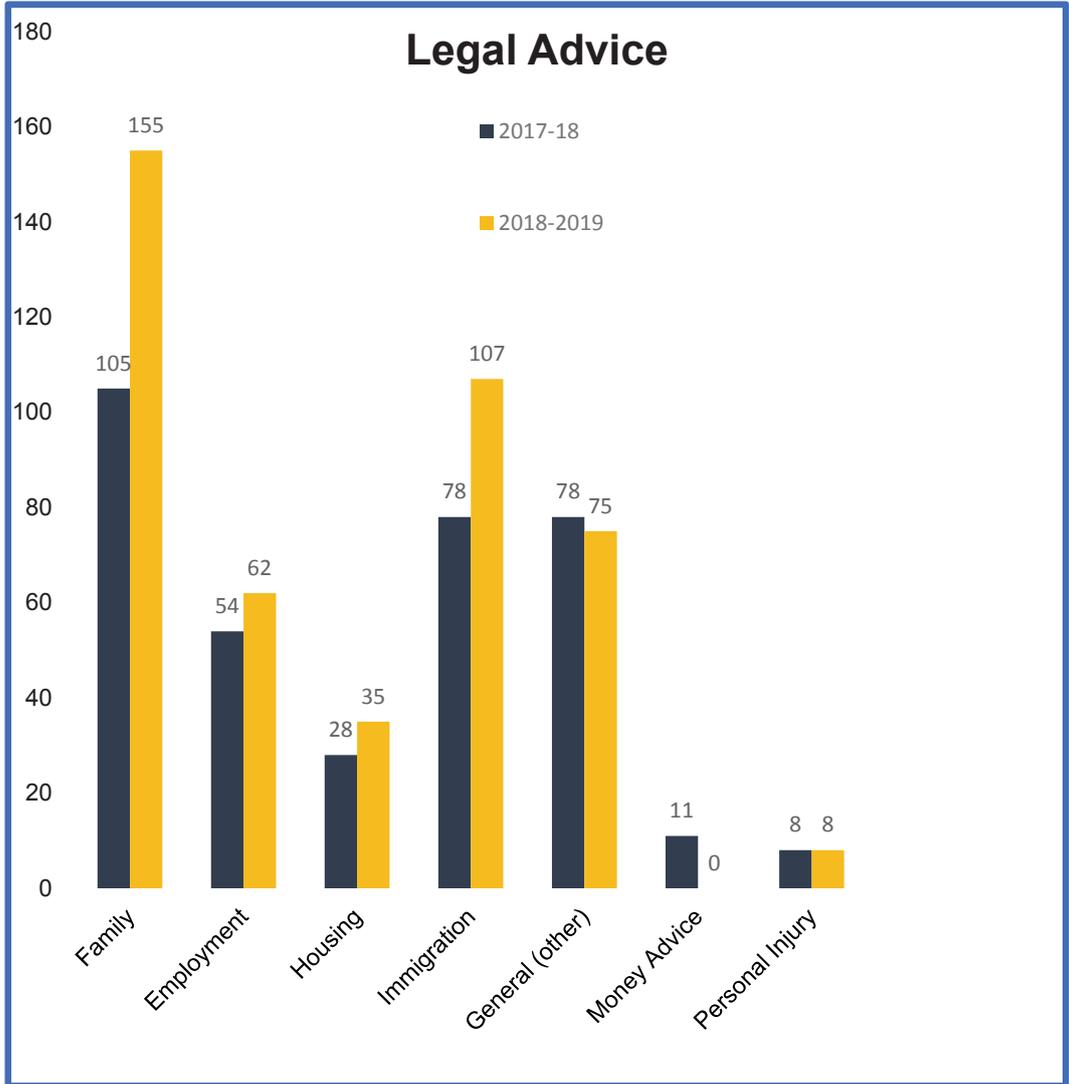
1399 people contacted us for help this year - an increase of 58% from last year

This chart compares the numbers of legal advice appointments in 2018-19 to those in 2017-18.

In 2018-19, we offered specialist, free legal advice clinics in Family, Employment, Housing, Immigration, General Law and Personal Injury.

The greatest increase is in appointments for advice in **family** legal issues – **up by almost 50%**.

We have also seen **37%** more people needing **immigration** advice.



“If I did not come here, I would have had no one to go to. A great weight off my shoulders.”

Tackling Discrimination in the East (TDE): Audrey Ludwig



Our discrimination law project,

TDE, provides free legal advice, assistance and representation to anyone experiencing unlawful discrimination, visiting and working in Suffolk (and to a lesser extent Norfolk).

Our financial year April 2018 to March 2019 was the third and final year of funding from The Big Lottery Fund. We continue to be so grateful for their support. This year was excellent and packed full of achievement. Our Discrimination Advisers - **Carol Ward, Pippa Banham, Jonathan Parratt and me** - have undertaken a significant number of challenging, yet worthwhile, discrimination cases helping **235 people** who consider themselves discriminated against, to understand the law, to challenge where appropriate and, in some cases, bring claims to an employment tribunal.

We've also had the greatest assistance from **Letha Evelyn** our Information Officer who ensures outreach clinics run smoothly, client appointments and

Some examples of how we made a difference:

- We helped a wheelchair user to convince a bank to improve disabled access in their car park
- We persuaded a finance organisation to change their communication systems to be more accessible
- As a result of our pressure, a multinational company has adopted a system of disability related “reasonable adjustments passports” for their staff and line managers
- We have convinced several pubs and shops to install ramps to entrances
- We have negotiated more than 20 agreed work references for clients

paperwork are all in good order, as well as managing our impact reporting, and we have had some brilliant student volunteers from University of Essex Law School.

I am also very pleased (and relieved) to say that we have secured further funding from the National Lottery Community Fund to continue TDE for a further 3 years, from September 2019-2022!



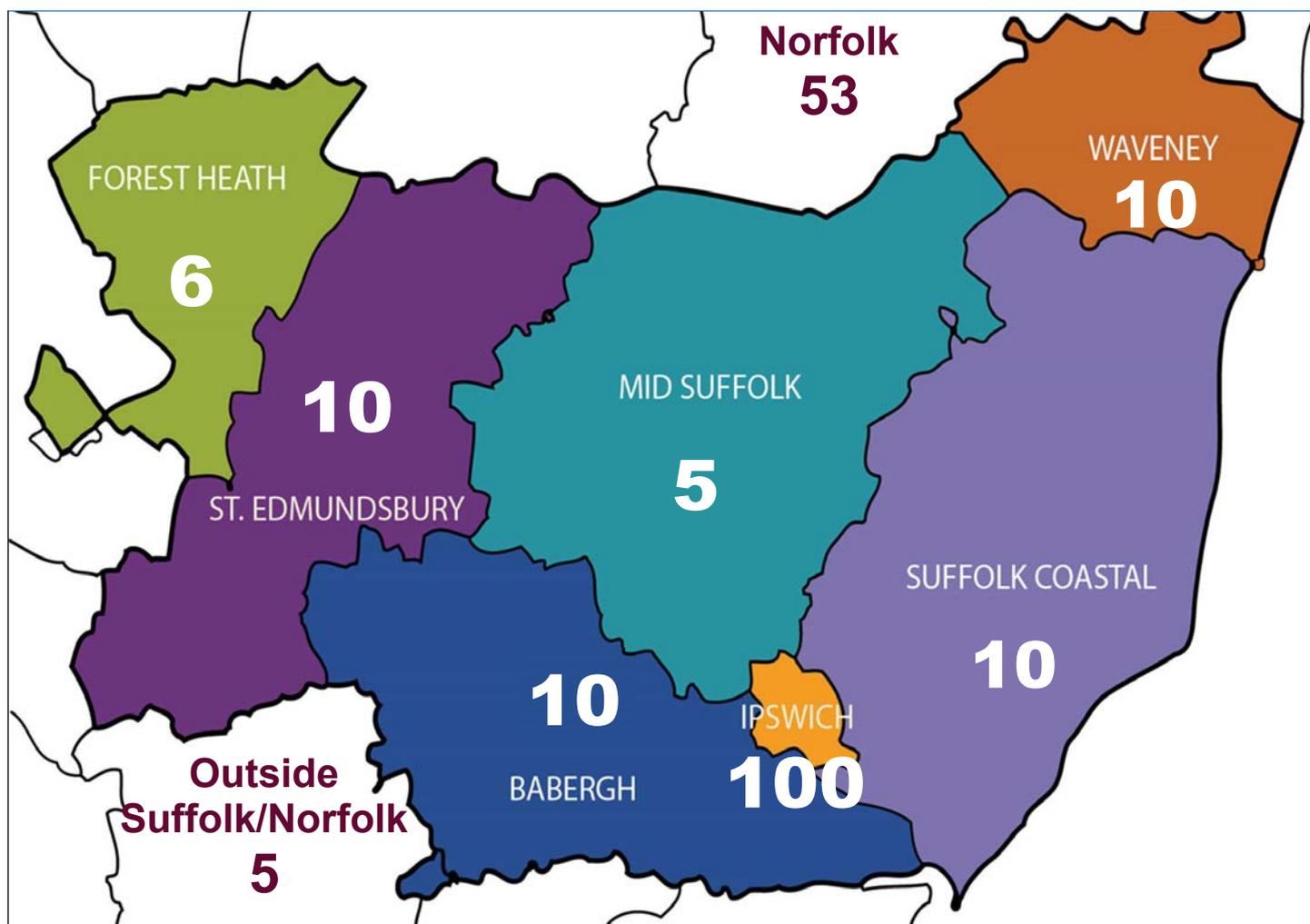
TDE Team (from left to right): Jack Child (law student volunteer); Carol Ward (Discrimination Legal Adviser); Horia Azizi (Volunteer); Pippa Banham (Discrimination Legal Adviser & Justice First Fellow); Letha Evelyn (Information Officer).

On behalf of our clients, we negotiated a total of nearly £115,000 in financial settlements.

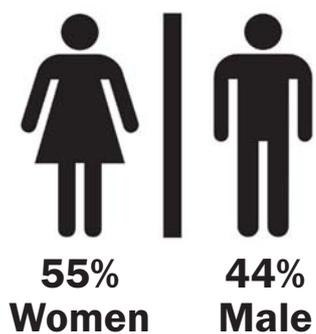
Thank you to the legal professionals who have generously shared their time and expert knowledge:

Joanna Bennett; Catherine Casserley; Jo Chimes; Carolyn Galway; Victoria Griffiths; Sean Jones QC; Giles Peaker; Andrew Rhodes; Tom Royston.

Where our TDE clients live



TDE by Numbers: Challenging Discrimination



- 57% have a disability or chronic condition
- 8% identify as LGBT
- 25% are aged 35-44 years
- 7% are aged 65 years or over
- 5% are aged 19 or younger

- 50% are White British
- 41% are BAME
- 9% are White European

- 39% have an income under £600 per month
- 52% have experienced discrimination at work
- 43% have experienced discrimination due to disability

“I certainly would not have been able to challenge my employers without them. They have empowered me to stand up for my rights without fear.”
TDE client

Case Study:

Valentine v DWP (2018)



Miss Valentine suffers from severe migraines and requires prescribed medication to try to control them. She has seen a Consultant regarding her migraines. She has struggled to obtain long term good employment. She managed to secure a

post as apprentice with the DWP, the schemes purpose being to take those who struggle to obtain work and to train them and nurture them as part of the government's social mobility agenda. She was however dismissed having had just a few days absence, most of which were because of her migraines. Her employer's policy was that staff were only allowed 4 days absence in the 6-month probationary period. There was discretion for the Managers to adjust this, but they did not do this or make any other adjustments to help her. The attitude of her employers caused Miss Valentine considerable stress, which exacerbated her migraines.

Our Discrimination Legal Adviser, Carol Ward, represented Miss Valentine throughout the case and in the Tribunal. This included reading and preparation of many documents, researching case law, examining witnesses, preparing and presenting closing submissions. Miss Valentine was present throughout the hearing, bravely sharing her side of the story in her witness statement and subsequent questioning. **The judgment was awarded in Miss Valentine's favour. This was a huge relief for her.** Employment Judge Postle labelled the behaviour of the employer 'perverse' and 'blinkered', criticising them for not following the law. The case was featured in The Guardian newspaper on the 21st January 2019 <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2019/jan/21/dwp-department-work-pensions-acted-perversely-sacking-disabled-woman>. Miss Valentine has now been awarded substantial settlement.

“You have been so wonderful, like a guardian angel to me. I cannot thank you enough,” Miss Valentine

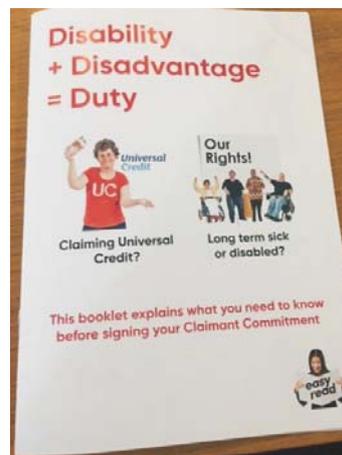
3 H's: Hate-Crime, Harassment and Human Rights Workshops for Suffolk Schools

- We have delivered 8 workshops to Year 9 pupils & Year 10 pupils
- In all, 428 pupils have participated
- On average, pupils reported their understanding of what constitutes a hate crime increased from 5.2/10 before the workshop, to 8.1/10 after it
- Teaching staff told us it was good for students to understand the impact of having a criminal record as a result of committing a hate crime

“The workshops were spot-on, and the booklets fantastic,”

Matt Le Marrec, Holbrook High School

Disability + Disadvantage = Duty



We have been privileged to work with learning disabilities experts **Ace Anglia** to reproduce an Easy Read version of our guide to claiming reasonable adjustments for claimants of Universal Credit who have a disability. This initiative was funded by the National Lottery. The original leaflet was produced in collaboration with **Ipswich Citizens Advice**.

“Getting the right legal advice was almost impossible until I was referred to TDE”



Staff are joined by Cllr Jane Riley, Mayor of Ipswich 2018-19, after the Ipswich Legal Walk
 From left to right (Top row) Jane Riley; Letha Evelyn; Audrey Ludwig. (2nd row) Fatima Ceesay; Sumaiyah Jeelani; Mayuri Patel; Jonathan Parratt

Complaints Against the Police: Julie Baker



I volunteer as a legal adviser with

TDE, specialising in police complaints. I deal mainly with allegations of race discrimination and where the police have breached their standards of professional behaviour.

I draft letters to the Professional Standards Department of Suffolk Police on behalf of my clients after seeing them for an initial interview, where I identify the seriousness of the police conduct. In a very serious police complaint, I forward the case to an 'action against the police' solicitor, however, most complaints I deal with myself. I phone the client with updates of where the case has reached. I liaise with Suffolk Police

via email, letter and telephone, holding occasional meetings at Suffolk Law Centre.

Sometimes I shadow SLC's Director, Audrey, where I sit in on meetings, take attendance notes and learn discrimination law. My background is human rights law, formerly working for Liberty in advice and information. Many issues at Suffolk Law Centre overlap with my previous work – such as stop and search, police law, prison law, discrimination and housing law.

I thoroughly enjoy my work at Suffolk Law Centre, each day is different, and I am continually being stretched on my legal knowledge and research, never quite knowing who will enter the office and what legal issues I will have to deal with – from identity fraud, to racial abuse, to police conduct. It is a pleasant working environment – friendly, supportive and diverse. It is great to use my legal training to help people, especially the most vulnerable people in our society.

Justice First Fellowship: Pippa Banham



Pippa Banham is a Trainee Solicitor and our Justice First Fellow.

The Justice First Fellowship is run by the grant-giving charity **The Legal Education Foundation (TLEF) to create future leaders in social welfare law. Below is an**

interview with Pippa by Fiona Bawdon, freelance journalist and Head of Comms at TLEF.

My best day...

I had a client who had been disabled since birth. She worked for a huge public services company after her job was outsourced. There was no consultation, and no reasonable adjustments made for her disability, and as a result her terms and conditions changed. She lost her pension.

In her day-to-day job, they didn't make any disability-related adjustments and she ended up being off sick with stress. I got involved through SLC's outreach advice clinic, and this case is a good example of how outreach services can really work well. We advised and gathered evidence to support her claim.

I remember sitting going through all the documents we had got hold of – it was like gold, as the evidence in her favour was so powerful. I kept saying to my colleague: 'Oh, god – look at this!' 'This is amazing!' It was mind-blowing. It was so clear her employer had made mistakes and treated her badly.

After that, I began negotiating with her employer, explaining why her case was so strong. They started off offering a pitiful amount, and we worked it up to a significant sum. They have also agreed to introduce new policies throughout the company, so many, many more people will benefit from the fact she came to one of our outreach sessions, which meant we were able to help her. It all stemmed from the evidence we gathered, so the day I found that was definitely one of my best days.

My worst day...

This one makes me cry. I had a client who was sexually harassed at work. With our support, she

reported it. It was investigated, and the perpetrator, her supervisor, was dismissed. We thought, great! That is brilliant! Then a couple of months later, she came back to me and said: 'Oh, I've been sacked.' They did treat her terribly afterwards, which really damaged her mental health, and she tried to kill herself. When I heard that, it really affected me. I was fuming at the perpetrator of the abuse, and then for her employer to treat her so badly that her mental health deteriorated to the point where she tried to take her life, was just horrendous.

We now have an ongoing case over her treatment and hopefully we can get her justice.

(Extract from an article by Fiona Bawdon.

Reproduced with permission from *The Justice Gap*, 2nd May 2019)

Law Centres Network: EU Citizens and Brexit



ISCRE and Suffolk Law Centre hosted **Law Centres Network** on 21st March, at an information evening for EU citizens on applying for 'Settled Status', so that they can continue to live and work in UK. Over 40 people from the

Roma community attended, as well as several other EU citizens and health and education professionals who support the Roma community in Ipswich. Eileen Bye, from LCN, gave an informative talk and Marius Ciuca did a fantastic job, interpreting for the Roma attendees.

Suffolk Family Law Support Service

Suffolk Family Law Support Service started in May 2018.

Supported this year by funding from the Litigants in Person Support Strategy (LIPSS), we set up a weekly Helpdesk based at the Ipswich Magistrates' Courts on Family Court day to provide people with no legal representation (estimated to be around 75% of people) with the benefit of an independent, expert legal information service, to help them to navigate the courts process. The Family courts can be stressful and intimidating. A key part of our service has been to provide people with help in the next steps in the process, including referral to our longer free advice appointments at the Law Centre if they need more detailed support and legal advice.

The Helpdesk is run by a rota of volunteers who are experts in family law. Over 2018-19, the service was project managed by Carole Parry-Jones, ex-Barrister, with admin assistance from Fatima Ceesay. Along with Carol Ward, who also works part-time as a Discrimination Adviser for TDE, Carole also volunteers to see clients at Suffolk Law Centre for longer appointments.



(L-R) Carol Ward and Carole Parry-Jones attend the Bar Pro Bono award ceremony.

“LIPSS are delighted to have supported the Family Law Support Helpdesk and advice appointments, which more than doubled the projected support provision.”

Suffolk Family Support Service was nominated for 2 national awards in 2018.

**“Very friendly, made me feel comfortable and explained well the things I was struggling to understand.”
Helpdesk client.**

In 2018-2019, 233 clients were seen at the Family Law Support Helpdesk.

96% of people who completed feedback forms rated the service as 'very good'.

Suffolk Health Justice Partnership

Thanks to the generous support of **The Legal Education Foundation**, we launched an exciting new initiative in collaboration with **Ipswich Citizens Advice**. **Suffolk Health Justice Partnership (SHJP) was founded** on the premise that the law makes it possible to resolve a range of social welfare needs.

We commissioned independent consultant, Steve Allman to conduct research to better understand how social prescribing in healthcare settings could increase access to social welfare legal advice. **Access to Health Justice in Suffolk** was published in June 2019.

Justice Alliance: A Suffolk Dad's Story

In October 2018, Suffolk Law Centre took part in a nationwide campaign with **Justice Alliance** to highlight the need for Access to Justice and the impact of court closures. The closure of Bury St. Edmunds and Lowestoft Magistrates' Courts in 2016 left just the one Magistrates' Court in Ipswich to serve the whole of Suffolk.

We were pleased to work with 3 film students from **University of Suffolk**, as part of their professional practice, to produce a short film specifically focusing

on how court closures effect people living in Suffolk.

Entitled, '**A Suffolk Dad's Story**', the film follows the story of a young father living in Brandon who has to get to Ipswich Magistrates' Court on Family day to attend a hearing on access to his child.

We launched the film during **Justice Week**, organised by the Law Society, the Bar Council and the Chartered Institute of Legal Executives, to raise awareness of access to justice issues.



A Suffolk Dad's Story

Up next

AUT

A scene from 'A Suffolk Dad's Story', a film produced by University of Suffolk Film Studies students: Jack Burman, Sophie Goodman and Christopher Daniels.



“Navigating Family courts can be very stressful, particularly when people have to travel from the other side of the county,” Audrey Ludwig, Suffolk Law Centre

Staff and Trustees are joined by Cllr Colin Kreidewolf; students Sophie Goodman and Jack Burman; Olumide Adisa (University of Suffolk) and Sue James (Justice Alliance) at the launch of A Suffolk Dad's Story.

Business Development: Sue Wardell



The staff and Trustees of Suffolk Law Centre have put so much time and energy into this first year. We should all be very proud of what we have achieved. However, we really could not do a fraction of this work without the invaluable support of so many: our friends in the local and

national legal community; our voluntary and public sector partners; the generous individuals who donate to our fundraising campaigns and sign up to be Friends of Suffolk Law Centre; our wonderful volunteers (see p.2!), and of course, our funders, without whom we would very soon grind to a halt!

This year, help has come from across local communities, individuals and the legal profession. Huge thanks to everyone who has raised funds, donated time, money, furniture and expertise. To all those who have walked with us, baked for us and joined us to raise awareness of access to justice issues. The 2018 Ipswich Legal Walk, The Legal Bake, Justice Week and National Pro Bono Week: we couldn't have done any of these without you. Thanks to:

National Lottery Community Fund; The Tudor Trust; The Legal Education Foundation; The AB Charitable Trust; The Access to Justice Foundation; Litigants in Person

Support Strategy for believing in what we do and funding us this year, and beyond.

Eastern Legal Support Trust; Suffolk and North Essex Law Society; Law Centres Network; The Law Society; Bar Council; Chartered Institute of Legal Executives; University of Suffolk Film Studies - for helping us to make stuff happen.

Ashtons; Attwells; Birketts; Clara Rose; East Anglian Chambers; Gotelee; Ipswich YRes; Jackamans; Kerseys; Prettys; University of Suffolk Law Dept for the walking and fundraising for us throughout the year. Judge Martyn Levett, for being our lead walker and cheerleader.

Cllr Jane Riley, Ipswich Mayor (2018-19), who chose Suffolk Law Centre as her mayoral charity: what fun your fundraisers were!

Gippeswyk Singers; St. Mary le Tower Christmas Tree Festival; Ipswich Building Society; Ipswich Quakers; Savills; The Good Gym (Ipswich); Cllr Jack Abbott; Stephen Broadhurst; Rupert Edwards; Martin Spettigue – thank you for your generous support.

Lastly, but absolutely not least, huge thanks to Matt Howgate, for your worldly wisdom and wicked wit.

Friends of Suffolk Law Centre make a regular donation to our work. By setting up a monthly standing order, for any amount, you can contribute to the costs of keeping Suffolk Law Centre running. Please contact us for more details and to request a standing order form.



Left: The Legal Bake is in February. Practice Manager Sophie's SLC Victoria Sponge.



Right: Sophie and her partner, Calvin, along with Rosemary Goulding (Volunteer) and Paul Burton (Volunteer), getting competitive at the Mayor of Ipswich's Annual Fundraising Quiz.

Finance Officer: Mayuri Patel



As Suffolk Law Centre brings its first operational year to a successful close,

I look back with a sense of pride at my role in getting us this far. Suffolk Law Centre's first set of audited annual accounts are included in this report – as a

'numbers' person, that makes me so happy! But, of course, it has involved lots of work. Here's a snapshot of what that work has been.

As one of those who works across both Suffolk Law Centre and ISCRE, I have responsibility for day-to-day finance and accounts work for both organisations. For SLC, that has meant my time has been spent getting systems and processes set up and dealing with any issues along the way. We started the year with a new bank account! We transferred legal

services projects and their respective grants from ISCRE to SLC this year, so I had to be sure that balances were correct. We have had our first staff employed specifically by SLC, so I have been busy setting up a separate payroll and liaising with Ipswich Borough Council who administer this, to ensure everything is in place. I have overseen SLC's registration with HMRC, completed Charities Commission returns and Gift Aid registration. Then there's ensuring pensions are set up, expenses paid, and printing codes allocated. Each new grant-funded project post requires a lot of work behind the scenes! As Finance Officer, I also raise and pay invoices, keep petty cash records, produce quarterly project expenditure reports, and complete financial monitoring returns for our funders.

In between all of this, I've been studying towards my Legal Aid Practice Manager's Certificate, along with Sophie, our Practice Manager. I am pleased to say, we both passed!



Tackling Discrimination in the East: Team Casework Meeting

Practice Manager: Sophie Hawkins

I joined Suffolk Law Centre as Practice Manager in May 2018 and what a busy year it has been so far!

My biggest task has been to prepare Suffolk Law Centre for its first ever Legal Aid contract. We were successful in bidding for a Legal Aid Contract in Housing which commenced in September 2018, but the real task was to find a Housing lawyer to meet the Legal Aid Agency's Supervisor Standard so we could begin taking clients. Suffolk has been lacking any Legal Aid Contract in Housing since 2014, so it was of utmost importance to us to address the legal advice gap within our region. I have been responsible for preparing policies and staff for a Specialist Quality Mark (SQM). We were unable to recruit a Housing Lawyer who meets the Supervisor Standard, but we did pass our desktop SQM, and we are working hard to agree with the Legal Aid Agency a mutually convenient way to bring this service to the area, so watch this space!

I also coordinate volunteer recruitment and inductions. We currently have over 20 regular volunteers who help us in a range of ways - from legal to admin. They are all fantastic, but a special mention to Paul Burton, who is an

ex-Practice Manager. Paul has been my mentor since I started, as he started volunteering with us just a few weeks before me. He brings many years of experience but also encourages and supports me in my role. We are incredibly lucky to have him; his support is invaluable.

Another thank-you goes to East Anglian Chambers, a Founding Patron of Suffolk Law Centre, for their kind donation earlier this year. Proceeds from the raffle at their annual dinner in November were donated to Suffolk Law Centre. This news came at the perfect time as we needed a printer for our ground floor office. We had moved our Reception downstairs in order to make our offices fully accessible to clients, but our photocopier and printer remained upstairs where most staff are still located. Thanks to the generosity of East Anglian Chambers that second, much needed, printer/photocopier is now working as hard as the rest of us.

Every day is different, but I love that my role is so varied. I am really looking forward to seeing what next year brings!

Photo below: (Left to right) Sophie with Sumaiyah, the new printer, and Fraser McLaren and Lucy Jenkins from EA Chambers (the printer is the one wearing a red ribbon)





Suffolk Law Centre: Open for Business!

Suffolk Law Centre

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Suffolk Law Centre

Period ended 31 March 2019

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the financial statements of the charity for the period ended 31 March 2019 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet and the related notes.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3. the financial statements do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the Charity has prepared the accounts (financial statements) in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) in preference to the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has since been withdrawn.

I understand that this has been done in order for the accounts to provide a true and fair view in accordance with the Generally Accepted Accounting Practice effective for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2015.

 2/9/19

L Thurston FCCA
Independent Examiner

Lovewell Blake LLP
Chartered accountants
First Floor Suite
2 Hillside Business Park
Bury St Edmunds
IP32 7EA

Suffolk Law Centre

Statement of financial activities

Period ended 31 March 2019

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	2019 Restricted funds £	Total funds £
Income and endowments				
Donations and legacies	4	6,767	114,494	121,261
Other trading activities	5	1,614	–	1,614
Total income		<u>8,381</u>	<u>114,494</u>	<u>122,875</u>
Expenditure				
Charitable activities	6	<u>13,312</u>	<u>116,744</u>	<u>130,056</u>
Total expenditure		<u>13,312</u>	<u>116,744</u>	<u>130,056</u>
Net expenditure before transfer of funds		(4,931)	(2,250)	(7,181)
Transfer of assets		41,423	37,668	79,091
Net movement in funds		36,492	35,418	71,910
Reconciliation of funds				
Total funds brought forward		–	–	–
Total funds carried forward		<u>36,492</u>	<u>35,418</u>	<u>71,910</u>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the period.
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Suffolk Law Centre

Balance sheet

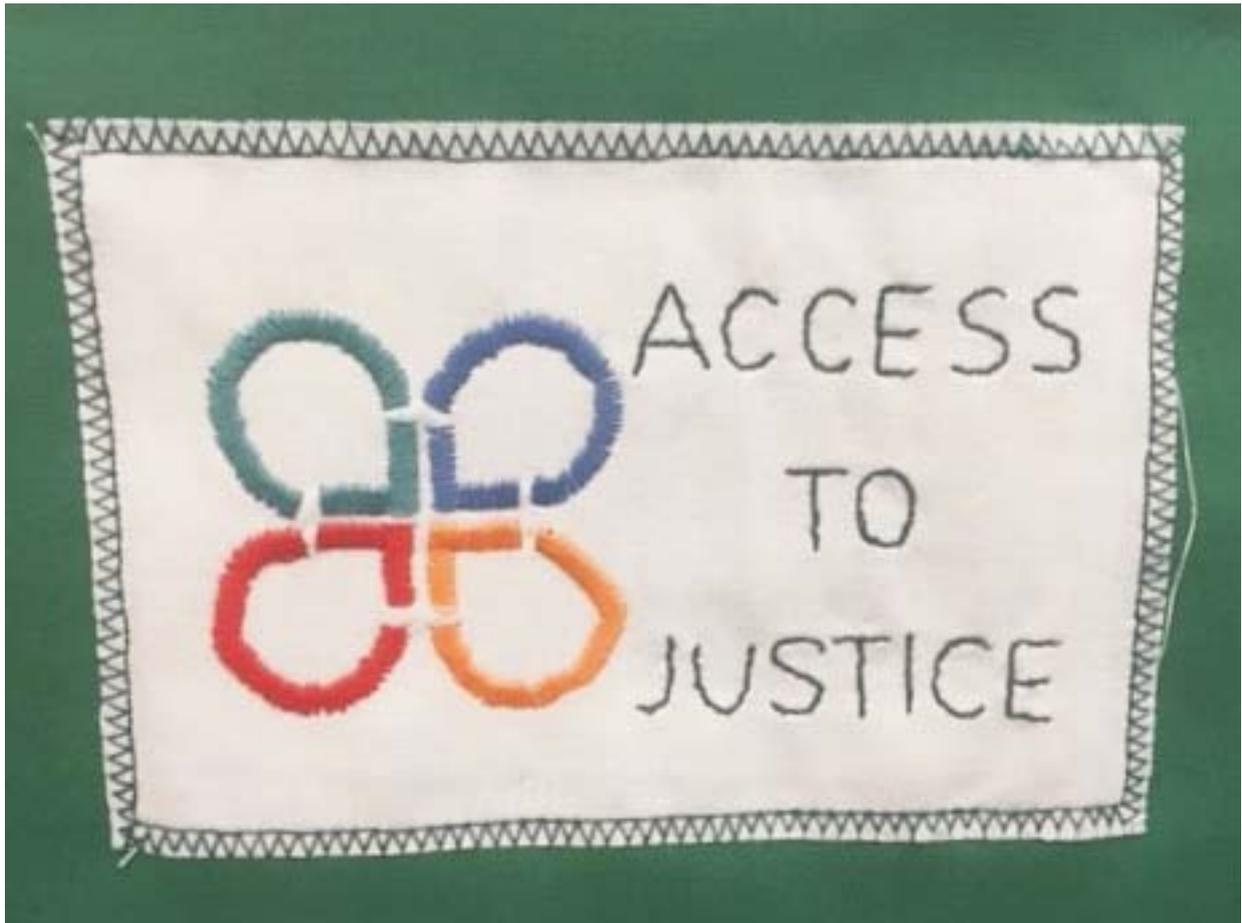
31 March 2019

	Note	£	2019 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible fixed assets	11		444
Current assets			
Debtors	12	4,705	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>81,262</u>	
		85,967	
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	13	<u>(14,501)</u>	
Net current assets			<u>71,466</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>71,910</u>
Net assets			<u>71,910</u>
Funds of the charity			
Restricted funds			35,418
Unrestricted funds			<u>36,492</u>
Total charity funds	14		<u>71,910</u>

These financial statements were approved by the board of trustees and authorised for issue on 29.03.19, and are signed on behalf of the board by:



G Clarke MBE (Chair)
Trustee



Access To Justice Embroidered Quilt Square: By Felicity Borwick.

The Women's Voices Women's Votes 100 (WVWV100) festival to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the start of women's suffrage in UK took place in October 2018. Suffolk Law Centre ran a workshop on Pregnancy and Maternity Rights as part of the programme of events.

The WVWV100 commemorative quilt is a collaborative work produced by women as part of the festival legacy. It will be housed in the new Suffolk Record Office premises (The Hold). We are delighted to be immortalised in this wonderful craft work!

Our Vision

Empowering the people of Suffolk to understand and assert their legal rights.

Our Mission

To provide legal services to help the diverse communities of Suffolk to gain equal access to justice, to challenge disadvantage and inequality, and to understand their legal rights, obligations and protections.

Our Values

Equal Justice

We believe that everyone should have access to independent, professional legal advice to challenge discrimination and injustice.

Dignity and Respect

We believe that all people should be able to live in their communities with dignity and respect and have the right to make informed choices.

Inclusivity

We believe that everyone should be able to access specialist legal support and achieve a just outcome, whether they live in an urban or rural area.

Independence

We are free to champion the rights of the most disadvantaged in our communities, and work with local people to prevent and challenge unfair treatment.

Social Justice

We raise awareness of human and legal rights and give people the confidence to assert them. We influence local social policy and promote social justice. We believe in early intervention and prevention, where possible. We are committed to working with partners and other organisations to address local need.



Suffolk Law Centre
46a St. Matthew's Street
Ipswich
IP1 3EP