

# National Conference 2025

## Workshop information

Friday 16 May – PM

### Workshop A

#### **Ten Things I Hate About Family Law**

*Speakers: 29 Bedford Row and 1 King's Bench Walk*

Many aspects of the work we do are downright annoying. Five barristers from 29 Bedford Row, and five from 1 King's Bench Walk, will vent their spleen by explaining the part of family law which really has to change. After that members of the audience can give their own views and vote on the reform they most want to see happen. If there's an enough of an uprising, maybe the Law Commission will take note...

### Workshop B

#### **How to get the best outcome in your initial client meeting and beyond: Why neuroscience and language matters**

*Speakers: Nina Francis, Emma Nash and Bina Modi*

The initial client meeting is a pivotal moment; how you engage and interact with clients during this first interaction will shape the success of the relationship and that of the case.

This workshop explores the intersection of neuroscience and language in family law, offering evidence-based strategies for empowering client communication, developing trust, and understanding what matters to clients for better outcomes.

Drawing on insights from the latest research in neuroscience, the workshop will explore how the brain processes emotions, makes decisions, and interprets language in high-stress situations, such as divorce. Understanding these cognitive processes can empower family lawyers to enhance their communication skills, reduce client anxiety, and build stronger rapports leading to better long-term outcomes.

### Workshop C

#### **Domestic abuse, coercive controlling behaviour and alienation: a masterclass**

*Speakers: Professor Jo Delahunty KC, Ian McArdle*

Building on the legal framework governing allegations of domestic abuse this will be a 'trap and tips' masterclass of benefit to those working with both victims and perpetrators of abuse, and those who represent the children impacted by adult behaviours.

Presented by eminent practitioners from both family and criminal law, the silks also being Recorders in their specialist field, this workshop combines best practice from each division to assist family practitioners in evidence management through the lifetime of a case - from out of court preparation to the witness box. It will be delivered by eminent practitioners in the field of Family and Criminal Law, the initial part of the workshop will take the form of an interactive, discussion-based lecture.

The second part of the workshop will look at case studies in smaller groups, breaking down the steps the Family Court should take, should not take, exploring why tactical gaps and mistakes too commonly undermine a promising case and how that impacts upon the decisions the Court makes. It will expand awareness, understanding and best practice application of the tools the advocate has at their disposal.

#### **Workshop D**

##### **Sharia law in family divorce matters**

*Speakers: Safeena Tufail*

What does shariah law mean and what relevance does it have in English Law when resolving matrimonial finances? Having recently joined the Muslim Shariah Council Mediation service, I will be mediating for couples who wish to come to an agreement away from court. The misconceptions and myths will be uncovered. An interesting area of law affecting families where one or both parties are muslim.

#### **Workshop E**

##### **Navigating toxicity in family law - clients, colleagues and beyond**

*Speakers: tba*

At every stage in a family practitioner's career, we are exposed to toxic relationships, either within the firm, handling client's emotions, strong personalities or challenging expectations. At a junior level, practitioners are less likely to speak out or set clear boundaries to resolve the issue, creating mental strain and an unhealthy environment of inevitable mistakes (we are all human) resulting in significant backlash and a fear of being open. This workshop will be a panel discussion with a leading psychologist, ISW/family supervisor and practising lawyer, to discuss how we build resilience and develop strategies for tackling this important issue.

#### **Workshop F**

## **Best practice for: post-adoption contact and international adoption**

*Speakers: Melissa Elsworth and Sharon Segal KC*

- Consideration of the Public law working group: adoption sub-group – Recommendations for best practice in respect of adoption – November 2024
- Discussion of the recommendations particularly relevant for Local Authority lawyers and those representing parents and children in public law proceedings, whether at the pre-proceedings stage or during proceedings.
- How to put the recommendations into practice.
- A reminder of some relevant case law and the little used provisions under s26 and s51 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002.
- The current statutory framework for incoming and outgoing adoptions and how to navigate case management issues that frequently arise in practice in adoption cases with an international element.

## Saturday 17 May – AM

### Workshop G

#### **Daisy through the looking glass**

*Speakers: Stephen Wildblood KC, James Evans. Dodie Finamore*

This is a play about father losing contact with his daughter, Daisy. It raises a spectrum of issues that arise in private law proceedings. After the play (40 minutes) the actors stay in role and answer questions from the audience.

### Workshop H

#### **Domestic abuse in financial remedy proceedings – A discussion between Lloyds Banking Group and Resolution members**

*Speakers: tbc*

This Workshop is to facilitate a dialogue between Resolution's wider membership and representatives from Lloyds Banking Group mortgages team. It is also to inform Resolution's wider membership of the further work that is being undertaken by the members of Resolution's Working Group on Financial and Economic Abuse, following the Report that was published in October 2024- Domestic Abuse in Financial Remedy Proceedings | Resolution

Depending on the work that is undertaken between December 2024 – May 2025, the session is likely to focus on:

- Issues that the finance industry have with Forms E, including the disclosure it requires and use of language;
- Mortgage capacity reports/ offers in financial remedy proceedings;
- What information about the financial remedy process should those working in the financial services industry have to educate them about this process – this is to inform the internal education procedures within banks and also the information given to customers.
- What information about lender and regulatory requirements do lawyers need to educate them about the mortgage application process
- Challenges faced by the financial services sector face when dealing with Court Orders

### Workshop I

#### **Additional needs and the impact on family proceedings**

*Speakers: Aimee Fox*

This workshop will cover i) supporting neurodivergent clients in court and adapting typical working practices to ensure clients' needs are met, ii) the impact of a child's additional needs and/or disability on the outcome of proceedings (including financial remedy proceedings), iii) types of evidence which may assist the court to understand additional needs and disability - where to find it and how to use it, iv) Education Health & Care Plans (EHCP) and their role in family court.

## Workshop J

### **Around the world in 80 days**

*Speakers: Lucia Clark, Lauren Deane and Nick Cooper-Soderberg*

Tips and traps for cross border divorce and finance cases involving 5 different jurisdictions with input from members of the international committee, and foreign lawyers. Particular focus on practical tips and guidance including:

1. Watch out for the speed of foreign proceedings
2. Watch out for orders that may not be enforced
3. Will a stay or Hemain work?

## Workshop K

### **Navigating family law and the modern family**

*Speakers: Gemma Davison and Tamara Adams*

Family structures have evolved significantly over the last few decades and so has the legal landscape. LGBTQ+ families face unique challenges when building their families and in navigating the legal system. We will consider how the law has changed and adapted and provide practical insights into the issues facing modern families in 2025. This workshop is intended to address the diverse needs of modern families, from legal parentage, surrogacy and donor agreements.

## Workshop L

### **Tax tips and traps for family lawyers**

*Speakers: Rebecca Fisher and Tim Gillett*

From 6 April 2023 there has been a new rule book for CGT on divorce. The changes were sweeping and significant.

Join us to explore the changes introduced and the practical implications of them, as well as considering other tax traps that might arise.

There will also be a short summary of the changes that may affect your clients because of the Autumn 2024 Budget.



Saturday 17 May – PM

### Workshop M

#### **A practical guide to short marriages**

*Speakers: Sadie Glover and Philip Perrins*

In this workshop we will explore the court's approach to short marriages and how the duration of the marriage can have a bearing on the final award. We will provide an overview of the law in this area and practical guidance as to how to run a short marriage case. We will look at the types of needs that will have a bearing on the sharing principle and the court's approach to maintenance, particularly when children are present. We will consider the potential pitfalls practitioners may face when dealing with a short marriage case and how to avoid them!

### Workshop N

#### **Practical tips for junior lawyers - preparing for initial hearings or NCDR in financial remedy cases**

*Speakers: Harriet Collins, Helena French and Charlotte Trace*

A discussion and round table session aimed at junior lawyers, designed to provide practical tips to get a case ready for initial hearings or NCDR that might be used in cases where clients are cost conscious, considering the differences in preparation for court versus preparing for NCDR when supporting your client.

The talk between junior solicitors and barristers will be followed by a round table discussion to enable more junior practitioners to air any questions or queries in a comfortable environment, with counsel providing their perspective on case preparation.

### Workshop O

#### **Forewarned is forearmed – what the next 12 months hold for private children lawyers**

*Speakers: Piers Pressdee KC, Catherine Wood KC and Andrew Powell*

An inter-active analysis and discussion of the latest and coming developments in the private children law field, focusing on Pathfinder Courts, NCDR, domestic abuse, relocation cases and modern families, led by three leading private children law practitioners.