

I work in a city law centre as a trainee lawyer

With knowledge I had chosen an under resourced employer

Yet as a member of a tech-savvy generation, known as a millennial¹

The issues technology poses remain vast and perennial

The printers break down whenever bundle is mentioned

IT support is remote, despite good intentions

Our staff aren't technicians, our websites are clunky

Yet most hits are for phone numbers, no matter how funky

Our clients face barriers: disability, language, race

They need someone to speak to in person, face to face

Advice can't be provided by a hard drive or a router

Any trust, tone or nuance is lost through a computer

Skype services are innovative, but not always so helpful

The technical issues defence lawyers face are dreadful

With pressured tight timelines for advice they are strained

There's no time for network issues when your client is detained

Court reformers suggest online hearings, with billions to invest²

Civil servants seem to have no interest in clients getting advice, let alone their best

¹ Denoting people reaching young adulthood in the early 21st century. Defined in Oxford Living Dictionary, accessed online <<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/millennial>>

² John Hyde, HMCTS delays £1bn court reforms by a year, *The Law Society Gazette* (5 March 2019) <<https://www.lawgazette.co.uk/news/hmcts-delays-1bn-courts-reform-by-a-year/5069501.article>>

So lawyers are to be deleted from the litigation process

With issues and defenses not considered, no specialist to address

Many clients receive benefits. Online journals are their contact with DWP

Yet they often have no access to the internet without a library

Which are being closed across the UK, despite librarian's help

For clients who are trying to manage the unfortunate hand they've been dealt³

This is not to say technology is all bad, I am no luddite or hippie

Yet the reliance on digital reforms rather than training people makes it tricky

To do the legal work that we are paid and trained to do

When we spend so much time dealing with CCMS (to name a few)

I hope one day technology will enhance, empower and automate

The way it does in other industries, yet currently the state

Seem to prefer to pay for software, leaving no budget for legal talent

And their lack of investment in legal aid is both exclusionary and apparent

³ Serina Sandhu, 'As a librarian I spend most of my time helping benefits claimants work out the Universal Credit system', The Independent (5 February 2019) accessed online <<https://inews.co.uk/news/uk/universal-credit-claimants-librarian-help-application/>>