



YOUNG LEGAL AID LAWYERS (YLAL)

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Young Legal Aid Lawyers (YLAL) is a group of lawyers who are committed to practising in those areas of law, both criminal and civil, that have traditionally been publicly funded. YLAL members include students, paralegals, trainee solicitors, pupil barristers and qualified junior lawyers based throughout England and Wales. We believe that the provision of good quality publicly funded legal help is essential to protecting the interests of the vulnerable in society and upholding the rule of law.

YLAL's objectives are:

- To campaign for a sustainable legal aid system which provides good quality legal help to those who could not otherwise afford to pay for it.
- To increase social mobility and diversity within the legal aid sector.
- To promote the interests of new entrants and junior lawyers and provide a network for likeminded people beginning their careers in the legal aid sector.

JOIN YLAL

We want to make sure our voice continues to be heard. Membership is free & open to all ages. This group is for people at the start of their careers. We welcome those concerned about or committed to legal aid up to 10 years qualification or call. If you are interested in finding out more, or would like to join Young Legal Aid Lawyers, please visit www.younglegalaidlawyers.org.

We meet in London on every second Wednesday of each month. Outside London we have a group in the north of England, in Birmingham and Liverpool. Please see our website for details of YLAL near you and the next meeting.

You can also contribute remotely by writing articles, responding to consultations and participating in various subgroups that work on specific projects to further YLAL's aims.

This year YLAL has been busy campaigning against the deep and far-ranging cuts to legal aid set out in the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders (LASPO) Act, which came into force in April 2013 and the government proposals that came after this. Over the last year our work has included:

- Submitting concerns on the changes to judicial review proposed by the Criminal Justice and Courts Bill and their impact on access to justice.
- Helping organise and promote protest action against legal aid cuts with other campaigners.
- Conducting training on legal aid for our members.
- Expanding our blog with stories about a day in the life of a legal aid lawyer to dispel the myth about fat cat lawyers: <http://viewfromthegravytrain.wordpress.com>
- Campaigning against the public sector cuts by way of active political protest & engagement with MPs and Peers.
- Helping organise meetings of the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on legal aid www.appg-legalaid.org.
- Working with the Justice Alliance, a coalition of community groups, charities and others interested in campaigning to save legal aid – see <http://justiceallianceuk.wordpress.com/> - to promote the petition against the cuts and the involvement of those affected by cuts.
- Attending University law fairs across the country.
- Responding to a consultation by the Solicitors Regulation Authority on reforming the framework for legal education and training through the introduction of equivalent means.
- Setting up “legal aid news” a periodic review of recent news and events in legal aid: <http://www.younglegalaidlawyers.org/news>
- YLAL will continue to lobby against the cuts to the legal aid budget, and raise awareness about the affects of the cuts, looking at ways to challenge LASPO and any new government proposals. We will work around the cuts and campaign to ensure that a sustainable service is maintained and a good quality legal service can still be provided to those who need it most.

For all YLAL papers and information on joining YLAL, go to www.younglegalaidlawyers.org