

A GUIDE

Compiled by Sally McLaren

Reliable Sources of Legal Information

for Litigants in Person

AUGUST 2025

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Introduction

Navigating the legal system without professional representation can be daunting. Reliable information is essential, but for litigants in person, finding trustworthy, up-to-date legal resources can be a challenge.

This guide brings together accessible legal information to help individuals better understand and engage with the legal process. It is organised around key stages: from seeking early legal advice and exploring alternatives to court, to engaging legal representation, considering funding options, and, if necessary, representing yourself.

This guide was created by a law librarian who is familiar with legal materials, though not legally qualified. It is an independent effort, unaffiliated with any organisation or institution, and should not be regarded as legal advice. Rather, it aims to bridge the legal information gap by directing users to helpful resources.

All information included was accurate at the time of publication.

Sally McLaren
August 2025

Terminology

There are a number of different terms used to describe someone representing themselves in legal proceedings, these include unrepresented or self-represented person (or party), appellant in person, and the most commonly used - litigant in person.

In 2013, the Master of the Rolls issued a practice note regarding preferred terminology:

"The term 'Litigant in Person (LiP)' should continue to be the sole term used to describe individuals who exercise their right to conduct legal proceedings on their own behalf."

- Practice Guidance, 11 March 2013
[2013] 2 All ER 624

A Note About Publication Dates

Publication dates are crucial when using legal materials because the law is constantly evolving. Legislation may be amended and interpretations can shift as new precedents are set.

Always aim to use the most recent editions of texts, or verify the information against up-to-date sources if you can.

The information in this guide is also subject to change. It is advised that you use this information as a starting point and check its currency where appropriate.

1. Sources of Help & Advice

There are a number of different sources of help and advice available, designed to support you throughout the legal process.

These range from self help guides written and created by legal experts, to consultations (either face-to-face or via telephone or email).

Many of these initiatives are created by not-for-profit organisations.

1.1 Law Centres

'Law Centres help those in greatest need and do not charge money for their services.'

- Law Centres Network

The Law Centres Network is the national body for Law Centres in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, supporting not-for-profit legal services that provide free advice and representation on issues such as housing, employment, immigration and discrimination. Law Centres are staffed by lawyers and other professionals.

List and Map of Law Centres - Law Centres Network

A comprehensive directory and interactive map of UK Law Centres.

<https://www.lawcentres.org.uk/list-of-law-centres>

1.2 Legal Clinics

Free legal advice clinics, many of which are operated by universities and staffed by law students, under supervision, can provide initial advice and next steps.

Find a Legal Advice Clinic Near You - LawWorks

Listing *'all the clinics that are open and able to offer advice face-to-face, by phone, email and digitally.'*

<https://www.lawworks.org.uk/legal-advice-individuals/find-legal-advice-clinic-near-you>

1.3 Advice Organisations

See also the list of [Organisations](#) at the end of this guide.

Advicelocal

AdviceLocal helps you find support for social welfare related legal problems. Searchable by postcode and topic.

<https://advicelocal.uk/>

Advicenow Guides

A collection of guides designed to help people through common legal issues including those relating to benefits, housing and employment.

<https://www.advicenow.org.uk/advicenow-guides>

Disability Law Service

A national charity, run by and for disabled people, offering free legal advice and representation in key areas of disability law.

<https://dls.org.uk/>

Equality Advisory and Support Service (EASS)

EASS has a free national helpline providing advice and support on issues related to the Equality Act 2010 and Human Rights Act 1998.

<https://www.equalityadvisoryservice.com/>

Free Legal Answers - LawWorks

Free Legal Answers is an online platform where individuals on low incomes (and not eligible for legal aid) can ask specific legal questions and receive free initial advice from volunteer solicitors.

<https://freelegalanswers.org.uk/>

Finding Free or Affordable Legal Help - Citizens Advice

Clear and concise information on available options.

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/law-and-courts/legal-system/finding-free-or-affordable-legal-help/>

Housing Loss Prevention Advice Service (HLPAS)

HLPAS is a government-funded, means-free scheme that offers both early legal advice on housing, debt and benefit issues for those at risk of losing their home, as well as in-court duty representation during possession hearings regardless of financial circumstances.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-loss-prevention-advice-service-hlpas>

I Need Immigration Advice - Liberty

Liberty is unable to provide free legal advice, but signposts a number of organisations that could be of help.

https://www.libertyhumanrights.org.uk/advice_information/i-need-immigration-advice/

Legal Advice and Help in Employment Matters, December 2024 (PDF) - House of Commons Library

Research Briefing outlining the different types of support available.

<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN02830/SN02830.pdf>

Legal Choices

Plain-English information to help people understand legal issues, choose trusted advisers and navigate legal services.

<https://www.legalchoices.org.uk/>

Legal Help: Where to Go and How to Pay, February 2024 (PDF) **- House of Commons Library**

Research Briefing outlining the main ways to access legal advice in the UK, including solicitors, legal aid, pro bono services and specialist organisations.

<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN03207/SN03207.pdf>

Signposting Guides to Pro Bono and Other Free Advice - Pro Bono Committees of England and Wales

Booklets published for Pro Bono Week, signposting free legal advice.

<https://www.probonocommittee.uk/guide/>

1.4 Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs)

Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) often include access to helplines which can offer 'first stage' legal advice and signposting.

If you are in employment, contact your Human Resources department to see if you have access to an EAP.

1.5 Trade Unions

Many Trade Unions provide access to free legal advice as part of their membership benefits.

Union Listing - TUC (Trades Union Congress)

The TUC directory of unions, including details of their benefits packages.

<https://www.tuc.org.uk/unions>

1.6 Contacting Your MP

MPs can help with issues which are under Parliament's responsibility, but cannot intervene in court decisions or private disputes. For local matters such as housing, council tax, or consumer issues, it's best to contact your local council or Citizens Advice Bureau in the first instance.

Find Your MP - Parliament.uk

Find out how to contact your MP, searchable by postcode, location and name.

<https://members.parliament.uk/FindYourMP>

Write To Them - mySociety

WriteToThem, created by mySociety, lets anyone quickly contact their elected representatives by simply entering their postcode.

<https://www.writetothem.com/>

2. Resolving Disputes Without Going to Court

Not all disputes need end in litigation and many can be effectively resolved without going to court. Due to the high costs of legal proceedings, it's wise to consider Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) in the first instance.

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), or alternatives to resolving a dispute without going to court, can take the form of arbitration, conciliation, mediation, and ombudsmen (for consumer disputes).

Alternatives to Family Court - Rights of Women

Explains alternatives to family court, outlining how each option works and when they may be suitable.

<https://www.rightsofwomen.org.uk/get-advice/family-law-information/legal-guide-alternatives-to-the-family-court-mediation-mediation-information-and-assessment-meetings-collaborative-law-and-family-arbitration/>

Sort Out Your Legal Problem Before or Instead of Going to Court - Advicenow

Explains how to resolve legal problems without going to court and highlights quicker, cheaper, and less stressful options for issues such as neighbour or tenancy disputes.

<https://www.advicenow.org.uk/guides/sort-out-your-legal-problem-or-instead-going-court>

2.1 Arbitration

Arbitration is a private dispute resolution process where a neutral arbitrator makes a binding decision based on evidence and arguments from both sides. It offers a legally enforceable outcome without going to court.

Arbitration - ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service)

Outlines the arbitration process in the context of employment.

<https://www.acas.org.uk/arbitration>

Chartered Institute of Arbitrators: Member Directory (CI Arb)

Search for qualified dispute resolution professionals, filtering by discipline (e.g. arbitration or mediation), geographic location, or name.

<https://www.ciarb.org/member-directory/>

Family Arbitration, 2018 (PDF) - Resolution

Introductory leaflet explaining family arbitration as a private, quicker alternative to court for resolving issues like finances or child arrangements.

https://resolution.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/arbitration_leaflet_2018.pdf

Family Arbitration: An Introductory Guide, 4th ed. (PDF) - Institute of Family Law Arbitrators (IFLA)

Outlines the family arbitration process, explaining what it is, how it works, typical costs, procedural steps and legal framework.

<https://ifla.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Public.pdf>

RICS Dispute Resolution Service

Provides confidential alternatives to court for resolving property and construction disputes, including mediation, arbitration, and adjudication

<https://www.rics.org/dispute-resolution-service>

2.2 Conciliation

Conciliation is a voluntary process where a neutral third party helps disputing parties reach a mutually acceptable agreement, often by suggesting possible solutions. Unlike mediation, the conciliator may take a more active role in advising.

Early Conciliation: How the Process Works - ACAS

ACAS Early Conciliation is a free, voluntary service to help employees and employers resolve workplace disputes without needing to go to an employment tribunal.

<https://www.acas.org.uk/early-conciliation/how-early-conciliation-works>

Using Early Conciliation - Citizens Advice

Provides information on early conciliation in the context of employment disputes.

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/work/employment-tribunals/employment-tribunals/before-you-go-to-the-tribunal/using-early-conciliation/>

2.3 Mediation

Mediation is a process facilitated by a neutral third-party (the mediator) who helps parties reach a voluntary and mutually acceptable agreement without imposing a decision. The process is confidential, flexible, and guided by a Mediation Agreement, with parties retaining full control over the outcome.

Chancery Bar Mediation Scheme

Advocate and the Chancery Bar Association's free mediation scheme for suitable Chancery and commercial cases where at least one party cannot afford a mediator.

<https://weareadvocate.org.uk/volunteer/partner-schemes.html>

The Civil Mediation Council (CMC)

The recognised authority for all matters related to civil, commercial, workplace and other non-family mediation cases.

<https://civilmediation.org/>

College of Mediators

Professional body supporting and regulating mediators across various practice areas. A searchable directory is available.

<https://collegeofmediators.co.uk/>

Family Mediation - Coram Child Law Advice

'Explains the process of family mediation, when mediation is necessary and the expected standards of a family mediator.'

<https://childlawadvice.org.uk/information-pages/family-mediation/>

Family Mediation Council (FMC)

Register of family mediators, searchable by postcode.

<https://www.familymediationcouncil.org.uk/>

Family Voucher Mediation Scheme - GOV.UK

Extended to March 2026, this scheme offers eligible separating families in England and Wales a one-off contribution of up to £500 to help cover the cost of mediation sessions in child-related disputes.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/family-mediation-voucher-scheme>

Find a Law Professional - Resolution

Search using your postcode. The advanced search function allows results to be filtered by area of work.

<https://resolution.org.uk/find-a-law-professional/>

Find a Legal Adviser or Family Mediator - GOV.UK

Helps you to locate legal aid solicitors or family mediators near you based on your legal issue and postcode.

<https://find-legal-advice.justice.gov.uk/>

Mediators - Legal Choices

Describes how mediators help both parties reach agreements by listening impartially, guiding discussions, and drafting any mutual settlements.

<https://www.legalchoices.org.uk/about/types-of-legal-advisers/other-legal-advisers/mediators>

National Family Mediation

'Largest provider of family mediation in England and Wales'

<https://www.nfm.org.uk/>

Veterinary Client Mediation Service (VCMS)

Independent ADR scheme funded by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, offering impartial mediation to resolve complaints between pet owners and veterinary practices across the UK.

<https://www.vetmediation.co.uk/>

2.4 Ombudsmen

An ombudsman is an independent official appointed to investigate and address complaints made by individuals about organizations.

Complaining to an Ombudsman - Citizen's Advice

Advice page on when to complain to an ombudsman, how to find one and what happens next.

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/get-more-help/how-to-use-an-ombudsman-in-england/>

Find an Ombudsman - Ombudsman Association

Helps you quickly locate the right independent body to handle complaints across sectors like housing, finance, energy, and public services.

<https://www.ombudsmanassociation.org/find-ombudsman>

2.5 Books on Alternatives Dispute Resolution

The Jackson ADR Handbook, 4th ed. by Susan Blake, Julie Browne and Stuart Sime (Oxford University Press, 2025) RRP £46.95

Making Mediation Work for You: A Practical Handbook by Kate Aubrey-Johnson (LAG, 2012) RRP £45.00

Mediation: An A-Z Guide by Stephen Walker (Bloomsbury Professional, 2016) RRP £32.00

Practical Mediation: A Guide for Mediators, Advocates, Advisers, Lawyers and Students by Jonathan Dingle, John Sephton (Law Brief Publishing, 2017) RRP £24.99

3. Finding Representation

Legal representation involves having a qualified professional advise, support and advocate for you in legal matters. They will also help with tasks like preparing documents, negotiating settlements and representing you in court.

3.1 Definitions

Legal Professionals - Who Does What? - The Law Society

Explains the roles of different legal professionals in England and Wales, such as solicitors, barristers, paralegals, notaries, and mediators.

<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/public/for-public-visitors/resources/who-does-what>

What is the Difference Between a Barrister and a Solicitor? - University of Law

A blog post explaining the distinctions between barristers and solicitors in England and Wales

<https://www.law.ac.uk/resources/blog/the-difference-between-a-barrister-and-solicitor/>

3.2 Solicitors

'Some solicitors give 30 minutes' legal advice for free. Some offer a fixed fee - that way you'll know in advance what the advice will cost. You can call a solicitor's office and ask if they offer a free half hour or a fixed fee.'

- Citizen's Advice

Adviser Finder - GOV.UK

A free online tool that lets you locate regulated immigration advisers. Searchable by location and type of advice.

<https://portal.oisc.gov.uk/s/adviser-finder>

Find a Legal Adviser or Family Mediator - GOV.UK

Guidance on how individuals across England and Wales can locate legal advisers, outlining options for legal aid eligibility, pro bono support and general steps to help resolve legal issues, whether or not you intend to go to court.

<https://find-legal-advice.justice.gov.uk/>

Find a Solicitor - The Law Society

Official database of over 200,000 legal professionals.

<https://solicitors.lawsociety.org.uk/>

Immigration Law Practitioners' Association (ILPA)

ILPA maintain a searchable directory of members to find an immigration advisor near you.

<https://ilpa.org.uk/>

Paying for a Solicitor - The Law Society

Explains the different types of fees a solicitor may charge.

<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/public/for-public-visitors/using-a-solicitor/paying-for-a-solicitor>

The Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA)

The SRA oversees solicitors and law firms in England and Wales to ensure they meet high professional standards. They publish information about complaints and pricing so you can make informed choices about which solicitors firms you use. Check the Solicitors Register and look for the SRA digital badge on a firm's website.

<https://www.sra.org.uk/>

What to Expect When Using a Solicitor - The Law Society

Explains how solicitors can support you through legal processes and sets out what happens when you engage one. Includes information on fees, service transparency, legal aid eligibility and regulatory protections.

<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/public/for-public-visitors/using-a-solicitor/what-to-expect-when-using-a-solicitor>

3.3 Barristers

'Direct access enables you to work directly with a barrister rather than going through a solicitor first. This means that you can save money as you will only have to pay one person, instead of two. You may also be able to fix the barrister's fees in advance, so that there are no hidden costs.'

- The Bar Council's Direct Access Portal

Direct Access Portal - The Bar Council

The Direct Access Portal is a free directory that lets you find and contact qualified barristers directly for legal advice or representation, without needing to go through a solicitor.

<https://www.directaccessportal.co.uk/>

Do I Need a Barrister - Advocate

Explains when individuals might need to instruct a barrister and guides users through the process.

<https://weareadvocate.org.uk/public/downloads/Teh-M/Do%20I%20need%20a%20barrister.pdf>

4. Fees & Funding

In the UK, there are several ways to fund litigation, depending on your financial situation and the type of case.

Apply for Help - Advocate

'Find out if you can get free legal help.'

<https://weareadvocate.org.uk/apply-for-help.html>

Costs of Legal Action - Shelter

A guide to the potential costs of housing-related legal action, including court fees, legal expenses and options for fee reductions.

https://england.shelter.org.uk/professional_resources/legal/court_action_and_complaints/costs_of_legal_action

Court and Tribunal Fees - GOV.UK

Provides information on paying, fee exemptions for low-income individuals and how to request refunds or fee reductions.

<https://www.gov.uk/court-fees-what-they-are>

Get Help Paying Court and Tribunal Fees - GOV.UK

Information on eligibility and how to apply.

<https://www.gov.uk/get-help-with-court-fees>

Legal Costs and Who Pays Them - Advicenow

Explains what legal costs you may face in small-claims and fast-track court proceedings and who is responsible for paying them at the end of the case.

<https://www.advicenow.org.uk/guides/legal-costs-and-who-pays-them>

Legal Help: Where to Go and How to Pay, 2024 (PDF) - House of Commons Library

House Commons Library briefing paper covering '*information about sources of legal help and advice, and how to pay for it.*'

<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN03207/SN03207.pdf>

Paying for a Solicitor - The Law Society

Including information on what you might be charged for, types of bills and payment options.

<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/public/for-public-visitors/using-a-solicitor/paying-for-a-solicitor>

4.1 Legal Aid

Legal aid is government help to pay for legal advice or representation if you can't afford it. It's available for certain types of cases and depends on your income and the issue involved.

'There have been dramatic reductions in the availability of legal aid in England and Wales since 2012 and these have overwhelmingly affected the poor and people with disabilities, many of whom cannot otherwise afford to challenge benefit denials or reductions and are thus effectively deprived of their human right to a remedy. The LASPO Act (Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act) gutted the scope of cases that are handled, ratcheted up the level of means-tested eligibility criteria, and substituted telephonic for many previously face-to-face advice services.'

*Statement on Visit to the United Kingdom,
by Professor Philip Alston,
United Nations Special Rapporteur
on extreme poverty and human rights
16 November 2018*

Check if You Can Get Legal Aid - GOV.UK

Explains how you can find out if you qualify for legal aid for civil cases via an online questionnaire that can provide guidance but not a final decision

<https://www.gov.uk/check-legal-aid>

Apply for Legal Aid Funding for Judicial Review (PDF) - Public Law Project

Explains the eligibility criteria, merits threshold and application requirements for obtaining legal aid or Exceptional Case Funding (ECF) for judicial proceedings.

https://publiclawproject.org.uk/content/uploads/data/resources/234/How-to-Apply-for-Legal-Aid-Funding-for-Judicial-Review_15_9_16.pdf

Civil Legal Aid: Means Testing - GOV.UK

Explains how your income, assets and certain benefits are assessed to determine if you qualify for government-funded legal help in civil cases.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/civil-legal-aid-means-testing>

Criminal Legal Aid Means Testing: - GOV.UK

Explains how criminal legal aid eligibility is based on a means test assessing income, assets and household circumstances, along with an Interests of Justice test.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/criminal-legal-aid-means-testing>

A Guide to Family Law Legal Aid, 2023 (PDF) - Rights of Women

Outlines who can get legal aid for family law issues, the types of cases that qualify and what to do if you're not eligible.

<https://www.rightsofwomen.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/a-guide-to-family-law-legal-aid-digital.pdf>

Help With Paying Legal Costs - The Law Society

Details the different types of cases where it's possible to apply for Legal Aid.

<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/public/for-public-visitors/using-a-solicitor/help-with-paying-legal-costs>

Legal Aid for Family Law Matters - Coram Child Law Advice

Details how legal aid works for family law matters, covering definitions, eligibility criteria and types of support available.

<https://childlawadvice.org.uk/information-pages/legal-aid-for-family-law-matters/>

4.2 Exceptional Case Funding (ECF)

Exceptional Case Funding (ECF) enables people in England and Wales to receive legal aid for cases not normally covered, provided they cannot afford legal representation and refusing aid would breach their rights under the European Convention on Human Rights or retained EU rights

Legal Aid: Funding for Exceptional Cases - GOV.UK

Outlines eligibility for Exceptional Case Funding (ECF) and explains the application process.

<https://www.gov.uk/legal-aid/funding-for-exceptional-cases>

Exceptional Case Funding - Public Law Project

Outlines the statutory framework, eligibility requirements, procedural steps and the process for internal review if funding is refused.

<https://publiclawproject.org.uk/exceptional-case-funding/>

4.3 Pro Bono

Pro bono is professional legal help given for free by qualified lawyers to people who can't afford it and don't qualify for legal aid. Organisations such as LawWorks and Advocate help connect people with pro bono lawyers.

Advocate

Advocate is a UK charity that connects people, who can't afford legal help and don't qualify for legal aid, with volunteer barristers. Applicants submit a form and case documents and, if eligible, Advocate tries to match them with a barrister for free legal advice or representation, depending on availability.

<https://weareadvocate.org.uk/apply-for-help/how-our-service-works.html>

Free Representation Unit (FRU)

Provides free legal representation for eligible individuals in employment tribunals, benefit appeals and criminal injury compensation cases, but only for hearings taking place in London or the South East, and generally only if the case has been referred through an accredited advice agency.

<https://www.thefru.org.uk/can-fru-help-you>

LawWorks

Facilitates access to justice by connecting volunteer solicitors with individuals and small not-for-profit organisations who can't access legal aid or afford legal representation.

<https://www.lawworks.org.uk/>

4.4 Conditional Fee Agreements (CFA) & Damages-Based Agreements (DBA)

'A conditional fee agreement (CFA) is an arrangement under which a lawyer agrees with a client that they will only be paid in specified circumstances (usually where the case ends in 'success' for the client). These are commonly known as 'no win, no fee' agreements.

[...] Under a damages-based agreement (DBA) the lawyer receives a proportion of the client's damages if the case is successful

- The Bar Council

Conditional Fee Agreements and Damages Based Agreements - OUT-LAW.com

A guide by Pinsent Masons law firm.

<https://www.pinsentmasons.com/out-law/guides/conditional-fee-agreements>

No Win No Fee - Legal Choices

Explains the essentials of "no win, no fee" agreements, including how fees and disbursements work, the risks involved and key questions to consider before signing.

<https://www.legalchoices.org.uk/at-home/i-want-to-make-a-claim/no-win-no-fee>

4.5 Legal Expenses Insurance

As an add-on to insurance (eg. home insurance), 'legal expenses insurance' may help pay some of the costs for certain types of legal proceedings, e.g. unfair dismissal, or boundary disputes.

Getting Legal Expenses Cover on Your Home Insurance - MoneySuperMarket

Explains how legal expenses cover protects against legal costs for disputes like boundary issues, employment matters, or medical negligence.

<https://www.moneysupermarket.com/home-insurance/legal-cover/>

5. Representing Yourself

If you're unable to obtain legal representation, whether due to financial constraints, eligibility issues, or personal choice, you may decide to represent yourself in court. This is known as being a "litigant in person."

'A litigant in person is an individual, company or organisation who has to go to court without legal representation from a solicitor or barrister.'

- Courts and Tribunals Judiciary

Does it Pay to Represent Yourself in Court

This short video produced by the Open University and the BBC (approximately 5 minutes long), outlines some of the challenges Litigants in Person can face.

<https://youtu.be/ia0XGX1CkQE?si=QbNoFpoms1O9NEzC>

Equal Treatment Bench Book, July 2024 (PDF)

Whilst this has been written for judges, it contains valuable information which should be read. Chapter 1 focuses on supporting litigants in person by outlining the courts' duties toward them, the challenges they face and practical ways the court and counsel can assist. It covers common misunderstandings, procedural difficulties and offers guidance for both civil and criminal case.

<https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/ETBB-July-2024-May-2025-update.pdf>

6. McKenzie Friends

'A McKenzie Friend (MF) is someone who is not trained or qualified to act as a professional lawyer, but is permitted to attend court with an unrepresented litigant [...] in order to provide moral and practical support, help them organise and find relevant documents when needed, and take notes. They do not have a right of audience, but they can, in exceptional circumstances, be permitted by the judge to speak on behalf of the LIP.'

- Incorporated Council of Law Reporting (ICLR)

Guidance from the President's Office - McKenzie Friends, 2022 (PDF) - Family Division

Official guidance from the President of the Family Division regarding the role of McKenzie Friends in civil and family court cases.

<https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/pfd-guidance-mckenzie-friends.pdf>

McKenzie Friends - Legal Choices

Explains the role of a McKenzie Friend and the support they can and cannot offer in court, their lack of formal regulation and how to find and/or pay for one.

<https://www.legalchoices.org.uk/about/types-of-lawyers/other-lawyers/mckenzie-friends>

McKenzie Friends: A Litigant's Guide - Incorporated Council of Law Reporting (ICLR)

Explains what a McKenzie Friend is, what support they can and cannot provide in court, the potential risks of using them, as well as practical advice for choosing and working with one effectively.

<https://www.iclr.co.uk/blog/legal-profession/mckenzie-friends-a-litigants-guide/>

McKenzie Friends: Support at Court Without a Lawyer, 2023 (PDF) - Rights of Women

Guide explaining what a McKenzie Friend is and what you can expect from someone acting in that role for you or the opposing party in your case.

https://www.rightsofwomen.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/mckenzie-friends_support-at-court-without-a-lawyer-1.pdf

7. Guides Written for Litigants in Person

These guides are written to support people who are representing themselves in court and they explain each stage of the process. Using a guide early on can save time, reduce stress and give you greater confidence as you navigate the legal system on your own.

7.1 Online Guides for Litigants in Person

Court of Appeal Criminal Division Guidance for Litigants in Person and Third Party Assistance - HM Courts & Tribunals Service

Guidance for use in proceedings in the Court of Appeal Criminal Division.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/court-of-appeal-criminal-division-guidance-for-litigants-in-person-and-third-party-assistance>

Employment Tribunal Hearings – Tips for Litigants in Person, 2015 (PDF) - Disability Law Service

Practical advice for individuals representing themselves at employment tribunal hearings. It provides strategies for effective cross-examination, note-taking and final submissions.

<https://dls.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Employment-Law-Litigants-in-Person-March-2015.pdf>

Family Court Without a Lawyer

Companion site to the book Family Court without a Lawyer by Lucy Reed.

<http://www.nofamilylawyer.co.uk/>

Going to Court Without a Solicitor or a Barrister - Citizens Advice

Explains how to represent yourself in court without a lawyer and what support and preparation options are available.

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/law-and-courts/legal-system/going-to-court-without-a-solicitor-or-barrister/>

Guide for Unrepresented Claimants in the Upper Tribunal Immigration and Asylum Chamber, 2013 (PDF) - Courts and Tribunals Judiciary

A practical guide on courtroom procedures for unrepresented claimants.

https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/JCO/Documents/Guidance/Guide+for+Unrep+Claimants+_F_.pdf

A Guide to Representing Yourself in Court, 2013 (PDF) - The Bar Council

Clear, concise advice for individuals representing themselves in civil courts, covering everything from preparing your case and filing documents, to what to expect in hearings.

<https://weareadvocate.org.uk/public/downloads/NWZSa/A%20Guide%20to%20Representing%20Yourself%20in%20Court%20-%20Bar%20Council.pdf>

A Handbook for Litigants in Person, 2021 (PDF) - Courts and Tribunals Judiciary

A comprehensive handbook for civil court procedures.

https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/JCO/Documents/Guidance/A_Handbook_for_Litigants_in_Person.pdf

How Do I Represent Myself in Court? A Guide for Self-Representing Litigants in England and Wales - The Barrister Group

A step-by-step overview for self-representing litigants in England and Wales, covering preparation before the hearing and what to expect in court.

<https://www.barristerconnect.com/blog/how-do-i-represent-myself-in-court-a-guide-for-self-representing-litigants>

Information for People Representing Themselves in Court - Bar Standards Board

Covering what to expect from opposing barristers and where litigants in person can find additional support.

<https://www.barstandardsboard.org.uk/for-the-public/info-for-people-representing-themselves-in-court.html>

Interim Applications in the Chancery Division: A Guide for Litigants in Person, 2013 (PDF) - Courts and Tribunals Judiciary

A practical guide with detailed advice and resources for litigants in person in Chancery Division cases.

https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/JCO/Documents/Guidance/chancery_lip_2013_2.pdf

Litigants in Person - Coram Child Law Advice

Explaining what it means to be a litigant in person in family law cases, covering courtroom etiquette, support options, capacity considerations and practical tips.

<https://childlawadvice.org.uk/information-pages/litigants-in-person/>

Litigants in Person - Courts and Tribunals Judiciary

Links to information about key resources for litigants in person in cases heard in the Chancery Division.

<https://www.judiciary.uk/courts-and-tribunals/business-and-property-courts/chancery-division/litigating-in-the-chancery-division/litigants-in-person/>

Litigants in Person in the Commercial Court - Courts and Tribunals Judiciary

A guide for litigants in person in the Commercial Court, covering procedures, support options and available pro bono help.

<https://www.judiciary.uk/courts-and-tribunals/business-and-property-courts/commercial-court/litigating-in-the-commercial-court/litigants-in-person/>

Litigants in Person in the Family Justice System - Family Justice Council

Signposting resources, including videos and plain-English guides, to help litigants in person navigate family court procedures.

<https://www.judiciary.uk/related-offices-and-bodies/advisory-bodies/family-justice-council/litigants-in-person-in-the-family-justice-system/>

Overview for Litigants in Person - Supreme Court

A concise overview of how to appeal to the UK Supreme Court, covering eligibility, application and restrictions.

<https://supremecourt.uk/how-to-appeal/uksc-lip-overview>

Preparing an Employment Tribunal Case - Citizens Advice

A guide on how to prepare for an employment tribunal, including information on collecting evidence, organising documents and following procedures.

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/work/employment-tribunals/employment-tribunals/making-a-tribunal-claim/preparing-an-employment-tribunal-case/>

Represent Yourself in Court - GOV.UK

A short guide explaining how to represent yourself in court, including how to prepare and present your case.

<https://www.gov.uk/represent-yourself-in-court>

Representing Yourself in Court as a Litigant in Person - Resolution

Advice on navigating court proceedings including instructions for handling divorce-related matters such as child arrangement orders and financial applications.

<https://resolution.org.uk/looking-for-help/splitting-up/your-process-options-for-divorce-and-dissolution/representing-yourself-in-court-as-a-litigant-in-person/>

A Survival Guide to Going to Court When the Other Side Has a Lawyer and You Don't - Advicenow

Includes information on courtroom etiquette and how to handle professional legal opposition.

<https://www.advicenow.org.uk/guides/when-other-side-has-lawyer-guide-litigants-person-0>

Unrepresented Appellants, 2024 - Immigration and Asylum Tribunal - GOV.UK

A guide detailing how individuals can appeal First-tier Immigration & Asylum Tribunal decisions without a lawyer.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/unrepresented-appellants-immigration-and-asylum-tribunal>

Upper Tribunal (Administrative Appeals Chamber): Guidance for Litigants in Person, 2021 - Court and Tribunals Judiciary

Explains the challenges litigants in person face and recommends best practices to ensure fairness and support throughout civil and family proceedings.

<https://www.judiciary.uk/guidance-and-resources/upper-tribunal-administrative-appeals-chamber-guidance-for-litigants-in-person/>

7.2 Books for Litigants in Person

There are a number of books available which are written for people without legal training, making them easier to digest and more affordable to acquire than most legal textbooks.

DIY Divorce and Separation: The Expert Guide to Representing Yourself (Family Law LexisNexis, 2014) RRP £36.00 [new edition publishing 2026]

An Emerald Guide To Conducting Your Own Court Case by Helen Little (Straightforward Publishing, 2022) RRP £9.99

Employment Claims Without a Lawyer: A Handbook for Litigants in Person, 3rd ed. by David Curwen (Bath Publishing, 2024) RRP £20.00

The Family Court without a Lawyer – A Handbook for Litigants in Person, 4th ed. by Lucy Reed (Bath Publishing, 2022) RRP £20.00

A Straightforward Guide to How to be a Litigant in Person: Representing Yourself in the Civil Courts, 2nd ed. by Michael Langford (Straightforward Publishing, 2023) RRP £10.99

A Straightforward Guide to What to Expect When You Go to Court: The Complete Guide to All Aspects of the Court System in the United Kingdom For The Litigant In Person by Robert Franks (Straightforward Publishing, 2018) RRP £8.99

8. Courts & Tribunals

These overviews of the structure and processes of the courts and tribunals system in England and Wales provide useful context and background information.

Children and the Law: the Family Court Process, 2023 (PDF) - Rights of Women

An overview of the family court process.

<https://www.rightsofwomen.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/pdf-guide-to-children-and-the-law-the-family-court-process.pdf>

The Court and Legal System - Supreme Court

Explains the role of the Supreme Court as the highest appeal court in the UK, outlining its history, structure and jurisdiction.

<https://www.supremecourt.uk/about-the-court>

The Courts and Tribunals of England and Wales - Incorporated Council of Law Reporting (ICLR)

An overview of the structure and hierarchy of courts and tribunals in England and Wales.

<https://www.iclr.co.uk/knowledge/topics/the-courts-and-tribunals-of-england-and-wales/>

The Judicial System of England and Wales: A Visitor's Guide, 2021 (PDF) - Judicial Office

An accessible overview of the structure and roles within the courts and tribunals of England and Wales.

<https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/International-Visitors-Guide-2021-updated-March-2021.pdf>

Structure of Courts and Tribunals System - Courts and Tribunals Judiciary

Clear illustration showing the hierarchy and relationships in the court system.

<https://www.judiciary.uk/structure-of-courts-and-tribunals-system/>

What to Expect in Court - Kinship

Step-by-step legal advice, covering family mediation, pre-proceedings, how to prepare, what happens when you arrive, how to conduct yourself during the hearing and what follows afterward.

<https://kinship.org.uk/support-and-advice/advice-and-information/what-to-expect-in-court/>

8.1 Court Listings & Practical Information

Daily Cause List - HM Courts & Tribunals Service

Daily list of cases.

<https://www.court-tribunal-hearings.service.gov.uk/>

Find a Court or Tribunal - GOV.UK

Information includes address and contact details, opening times and building information e.g. disabled access and parking.

<https://www.gov.uk/find-court-tribunal>

Get an Interpreter at a Court or Tribunal - GOV.UK

Explains that individuals who do not understand English, or who are deaf or hard of hearing, may be provided with a free interpreter during court or tribunal hearings, depending on the case type and availability.

<https://www.gov.uk/get-interpreter-at-court-or-tribunal>

HMCTS E-Filing Service for Citizens and Professionals - GOV.UK

Explains how eligible users, including legal professionals and litigants in person, can register for and use HMCTS's online E-Filing system (CE-File) to submit, pay for and manage documents electronically across various courts and tribunals, while also outlining alternative filing options and support resources.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/hmcts-e-filing-service-for-citizens-and-professionals>

8.2 Court Etiquette

Court Etiquette - Coram Child Law Advice

Brief guide on what to wear and how to speak to judges.

<https://childlawadvice.org.uk/information-pages/court-etiquette/>

What Do I Call a Judge? - Courts and Tribunals Judiciary

Explains how to properly address judges whether in writing or in court.

<https://www.judiciary.uk/guidance-and-resources/what-do-i-call-a-judge/>

What to Expect Coming to a Court or Tribunal - GOV.UK

Provides clear, accessible guidance on the roles and responsibilities of individuals involved in court and tribunal hearings across England and Wales.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-to-expect-coming-to-a-court-or-tribunal>

Who's Who in Courts and Tribunals - Courts and Tribunals Judiciary

Information on who you might encounter in court and what their roles entail.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hmcts-whos-who-in-courts-and-tribunals>

8.3 Court Guides

A court guide is a document that offers practical information and instructions on the procedures and operations of a particular court or type of court.

Use the Courts and Tribunals Judiciary website to [search guides](#) to make sure you have the most up-to-date version.

Administrative Court Judicial Review Guide, October 2024 (PDF)

https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/24.85_HMCTS_Administrative_Court_Guide_WEB1.pdf

Chancery Guide, December 2024 (PDF)

<https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Chancery-Guide-2024-web.pdf>

The Circuit Commercial Court Guide, August 2023 (PDF)

<https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Circuit-Commercial-Court-Guide-2023-web.pdf>

The Commercial Court Guide (incorporating The Admiralty Court Guide), July 2023 (PDF)

https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/14.341_JO_Commercial_Court_Guide_FINAL.pdf

Court of Appeal (Civil Division) Guide, June 2025 (PDF)

https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/35.67_JO_Court-of-Appeal-Civil-Division-Guide_FINAL_WEB.pdf

Guide to the Intellectual Property Enterprise Court Small Claims Track, July 2024

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/intellectual-property-enterprise-court-a-guide-to-small-claims/guide-to-the-intellectual-property-enterprise-court-small-claims-track>

Guide to Proceedings in the Court of Appeal Criminal Division, January 2024 (PDF)

<https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Guide-to-proceedings-in-the-CACD-Jan-2024-Final.pdf>

Intellectual Property Enterprise Court (IPEC), November 2024 (PDF)

<https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Intellectual-Property-Enterprise-Court-IPEC-Guide-revised-November-2024.pdf>

King's Bench Division Guide, April 2025 (PDF)

https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/35.16_JO_Kings_Bench_Division_Guide_2025_WEB4.pdf

The Senior Courts Costs Office Guide, 2023 (PDF)

<https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Senior-Courts-Costs-Guide-2023-web.pdf>

Technology and Construction Court Guide, October 2022 (PDF)

<https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/The-Technology-and-Construction-Court-Guide.pdf>

8.4 Procedure Rules

It is important to read the the relevant procedure rules, such as the CPR for civil cases, because, as emphasised by the Supreme Court in [Barton v Wright Hassall LLP \[2018\] UKSC 12](#), litigants in person are expected to familiarise themselves with the relevant procedural rules and cannot expect special treatment or exemption from compliance.

"Their lack of representation will often justify making allowances in making case management decisions and in conducting hearings. But it will not usually justify applying to litigants in person a lower standard of compliance with rules or orders of the court. The overriding objective requires the courts so far as practicable to enforce compliance with the rules [...] The rules do not in any relevant respect distinguish between represented and unrepresented parties."

Barton v Wright Hassall LLP [2018] UKSC 12

Civil Procedure Rules

<https://www.justice.gov.uk/courts/procedure-rules/civil>

Civil Procedure Rules: A Glossary

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/civil-procedure-rules-glossary>

Criminal Procedure Rules

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/rules-and-practice-directions-2020>

Family Procedure Rules

https://www.justice.gov.uk/courts/procedure-rules/family/rules_pd_menu

Other Procedure Rules for Magistrates' Courts and the Crown Court

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/updates-on-other-procedure-rules-for-magistrates-courts-and-the-crown-court>

Rules of the Supreme Court

<https://supremecourt.uk/how-to-appeal/rules>

8.5 Court Forms

Digital Support for Those Who Need Help With Online Forms - We Are Group

The We Are Group and HM Courts & Tribunals Service, in partnership, provide free digital support, via phone, text, email, or in-person to help individuals with limited digital skills to complete a range of online legal forms.

<https://www.wearegroup.com/hmcts-user>

Civil Court Forms Arranged by Subject Matter - GOV.UK

Court forms by subject matter, covering issues such as claims, enforcement, disclosure and injunctions, for use in civil legal proceedings.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-procedure-rules-court-forms/list-of-civil-court-forms-arranged-by-subject-matter>

County Court Forms - GOV.UK

Browse by title or form reference.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/county-court-forms>

Court and Tribunal Forms - GOV.UK

A-Z of collections of forms.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/court-and-tribunal-forms>

Criminal Procedure Forms - GOV.UK

Forms to use with the Criminal Procedure Rules.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/criminal-procedure-rules-forms>

Employment Tribunal Forms and Guidance - GOV.UK

A collection of essential forms and guidance for employment tribunal claims in the UK.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/employment-tribunal-forms>

Family Law forms - GOV.UK

A collection of official forms for family law cases in the UK.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/family-law-forms>

Family Procedure Rules Forms - Ministry of Justice

Provides a comprehensive list of official PDF forms to be used in family court proceedings under the Family Procedure Rules in England and Wales.

<https://www.justice.gov.uk/courts/procedure-rules/family/formspage>

Supreme Court Forms - Supreme Court

Downloadable PDF forms required for various applications such as appeals, interventions, cost claims and fee assistance, all of which must be submitted via the online portal.

<https://supremecourt.uk/how-to-appeal/court-forms>

9. Support Schemes at Court

There a number of schemes operating within courts, some can offer emotional and more practical support, whilst others can provide on-the-day legal advice and representation.

9.1 Emotional & Practical Support

The Coroners Court Support Service

Offers free, confidential emotional and practical support to those attending coroners' courts for inquests. They operate both on-site during hearings and via a national helpline to help people understand procedures, manage expectations and navigate the inquest process more effectively.

<https://coronerscourtsupportservice.org.uk/>

Support Through Court

UK legal charity that offers free, practical, procedural, and emotional support to help people facing family or civil court alone navigate the process and complete necessary forms. While legal advice isn't provided, they can help make the process a lot clearer.

<https://www.supportthroughcourt.org/locations/>

9.2 Court Duty Schemes

The Birmingham Chancery Litigation in Person Support Scheme (B-CLIPS)

The Birmingham Chancery Litigant in Person Support Scheme (B-CLIPS) provides free, on-the-day legal advice and advocacy from volunteer Chancery barristers to unrepresented parties appearing on the Interim Applications List at the Business and Property Court in Birmingham.

<https://weareadvocate.org.uk/volunteer/partner-schemes.html>

Chancery Bar Litigant in Person Support Scheme (CLIPS)

CLIPS (Chancery Bar Litigant in Person Support Scheme) offers free, same-day legal help to people representing themselves in urgent hearings in the Chancery Division's Applications Court. Run by the Chancery Bar Association (CBA) with support from RCJ Advice, Advocate, and others, the scheme provides volunteer barristers who can give advice, procedural guidance and sometimes represent litigants in court. Support is limited to the day's hearing, with longer-term help referred to RCJ Advice.

<https://www.judiciary.uk/courts-and-tribunals/business-and-property-courts/chancery-division/litigating-in-the-chancery-division/clips/>

Commercial Court and London Circuit Commercial Court Pro Bono Scheme

A pro bono scheme to provide volunteer barristers for litigants in person with short applications in the London Circuit Commercial Court and the Commercial Court. Coordinated by Combar and Advocate with the support of senior judges.

<https://weareadvocate.org.uk/volunteer/partner-schemes.html>

Company Insolvency Pro Bono Scheme (COIN)

COIN is a free legal support service for litigants in person attending the winding up court in London, offering advice, representation and practical guidance on insolvency procedures on a weekly basis at the High Court's Rolls Building.

<https://weareadvocate.org.uk/volunteer/partner-schemes.html>

Court of Protection Scheme

This scheme provides specialist legal support to litigants in person in the Court of Protection and related areas who need help beyond what Advocate normally offers. This can include advice on documentation, case merits, drafting and representation at hearings.

<https://weareadvocate.org.uk/volunteer/partner-schemes.html>

Employment Law Appeal Advice Scheme (ELAAS)

The ELAAS scheme offers free legal representation at certain preliminary hearings in the Employment Appeal Tribunal, provided by experienced volunteer barristers and solicitors specialising in employment law.

<https://weareadvocate.org.uk/volunteer/partner-schemes.html>

Employment Tribunal Litigants in Person Support Scheme (ELIPS)

ELIPS is a service run by the Employment Lawyers Association for unrepresented individuals meeting their criteria (e.g. involved in a 'live claim'). ELIPs can provide one-off appointments with volunteer employment lawyers via Zoom. These can help with tribunal procedures, documents and case preparation but not representation. It's available in several UK regions and aims to improve access to justice for those navigating employment tribunals alone.

<https://www.elaweb.org.uk/pro-bono/elips-litigants>

Exeter Family Law Clinic

The Exeter Family Law Clinic offers free, in-person appointments each month at Exeter Combined Court Centre, where volunteer family law barristers provide advice to litigants in person involved in or considering private family law proceedings, with follow-up support from [CASS+](#) and potential referral to Advocate for further pro bono help.

<https://weareadvocate.org.uk/volunteer/partner-schemes.html>

Leeds Business and Property Court Litigant in Person Scheme

The Leeds Business and Property Court Litigant-in-Person Support Scheme (Leeds BPC Scheme) provides free, on-the-day legal advice and advocacy from volunteer Chancery barristers to unrepresented parties with matters listed in the Companies Court Winding-Up List or the District Judges' Applications List, held twice a month at the Leeds courts.

<https://weareadvocate.org.uk/volunteer/partner-schemes.html>

Manchester Chancery Litigant in Person Support Scheme (M-CLIPS)

The Manchester Chancery Litigant in Person Support Scheme (M-CLIPS) provides free, on-the-day legal advice and advocacy from volunteer Chancery barristers to unrepresented parties with short interim applications at the Business and Property Court in Manchester.

<https://weareadvocate.org.uk/volunteer/partner-schemes.html>

Newcastle Chancery Bar Litigant in Person Support Scheme (NCLIPS)

The Newcastle Chancery Litigants-in-Person Scheme (NCLIPS) offers free, on-the-day legal advice and advocacy from volunteer barristers to unrepresented parties with cases on the District Judge Business and Property Applications List, on a weekly basis at the Newcastle Civil and Family Courts and Tribunals Centre.

<https://weareadvocate.org.uk/volunteer/partner-schemes.html>

Personal Insolvency Litigation Advice and Representation Scheme (PILARS)

PILARS is a scheme run by Advocate and provides free legal advice and representation from volunteer barristers to unrepresented debtors or bankrupt parties who are not eligible for legal aid and cannot afford legal help in bankruptcy-related proceedings.

<https://weareadvocate.org.uk/volunteer/partner-schemes.html>

South West Chancery Litigant in Person Scheme (SW-CLIPS)

The South West Chancery Litigant in Person Support Scheme (SW-CLIPS) offer free, on-the-day legal advice and advocacy to unrepresented parties with cases in the Business and Property Courts' Application List on a weekly basis at the Bristol Civil and Family Justice Centre.

<https://weareadvocate.org.uk/volunteer/partner-schemes.html>

South West County Court Appeals Scheme (SW-CCAS)

The South West County Court Appeals Scheme (SW-CCAS) provides free legal support to litigants in person appealing to High Court Judges at the Bristol Civil and Family Justice Centre, offering advice on merit, drafting of skeleton arguments and representation at oral permission hearings where appropriate.

<https://weareadvocate.org.uk/volunteer/partner-schemes.html>

10. Legal Research

Legal research is fundamental to case preparation. Thorough research, using reliable sources can strengthen your arguments and increase the likelihood of an amenable outcome.

It can also feel intimidating, confusing and complex. However, there are a number of research guides, explainers and published works, that can be used as instructive starting points.

10.1 Books on Legal Research

Butterworths Legal Research Guide 2nd ed. by Guy Holborn
(Oxford University Press, 2001) RRP £49.99

Effective Legal Research 4th ed. by John Knowles & Philip
Thomas (Sweet & Maxwell, 2016) RRP £21.95

Legal Research: A Practitioner's Handbook, 3rd ed. by Emily
Allbon & Ian Hunter (Wildy, Simmonds and Hill, 2019) RRP
£55.00

10.2 Online Legal Research Guides

10.2.1. ICLR Guides

A range of really good explainers have been produced by the Incorporated Council of Law Reporting (ICLR). A number of these are listed below, but it's worth exploring the rest of the 'Knowledge' section of their website:

<https://www.iclr.co.uk/knowledge/>

Anatomy of a Law Report

<https://www.iclr.co.uk/knowledge/case-law/anatomy-of-a-law-report/>

What's the Difference Between a "Law Report" and a "Transcript"?

<https://www.iclr.co.uk/knowledge/case-law/whats-the-difference-between-a-law-report-and-a-transcript/>

What is a Law Report?

<https://www.iclr.co.uk/knowledge/case-law/what-is-a-law-report/>

What is Legislation

<https://www.iclr.co.uk/knowledge/legislation/what-is-legislation/>

Where is Legislation Published?

<https://www.iclr.co.uk/knowledge/legislation/where-is-legislation-published/>

10.2.2. Other Useful Guides

Finding the Law - Disability Rights UK

Explains how to locate and use relevant legislation, regulations and case law related to social security benefits and tax credits, providing guidance on identifying authoritative sources and navigating tribunal decisions.

<https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/resources/finding-law>

How the Law Works - Courts and Tribunals Judiciary

Explaining key legal concepts including the rule of law, sentencing, judicial review and the appeals process.

<https://www.judiciary.uk/how-the-law-works/>

Law Reports: Hierarchy and the Status of Authorities - LexisNexis

Explains the hierarchy of reported UK case law.

<https://www.lexisnexis.co.uk/blog/dispute-resolution/law-reports-status-of-authorities>

Law Reports and the Doctrine of Precedent - Oxford University

Explains the purpose and structure of law reports, how they're organised, why they carry legal authority under the doctrine of precedent, how to interpret their structure and citations and why certain series (like the Official Law Reports) are considered more authoritative

<https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/legal-research-and-mooting-skills-programme/law-reports>

A Short Guide to the Criminal Justice System, 2022 (PDF) - House of Commons Library

An overview of the criminal justice system, focusing on crime reporting, police investigations, and court proceedings. It outlines the roles of key actors such as police forces, the Crown Prosecution Service, the Courts and Tribunals Service, and the various courts involved in the process.

<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9331/CBP-9331.pdf>

Understanding Legislation - legislation.gov.uk

Provides guidance on how UK legislation works, how to distinguish between primary and secondary legislation and how to interpret statutes with reference to amendments and annotations.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/understanding-legislation>

11. Generative AI

Generative AI is a type of artificial intelligence that creates new output by learning patterns from existing data. OpenAI's ChatGPT is an example of Generative AI.

Litigants in person must take great care if using Generative AI applications. There are serious risks involved, highlighted by recent High Court rulings, such as [Ayinde v London Borough of Haringey \[2025\] EWHC 1383 \(Admin\)](#), where fabricated legal citations, likely generated by AI, resulted in referrals to regulatory bodies and warnings about potential contempt of court.

If you do use Generative AI:

- Avoid relying on it alone. It can be useful when you are trying to get started but it is not a substitute for taking advice or doing legal research.
- Always double-check the accuracy of any output. Generative AI tools can hallucinate, meaning they may invent legal cases and citations that don't exist.
- As well as verifying facts, it is important to check the currency of the output.
- Consider privacy and security issues, especially when dealing with sensitive data.
- Be aware of potential biases in any generated content.

According to [judicial guidance](#) (April 2025) users must take responsibility for any AI-generated material submitted in court.

In the recent case law, the courts have reiterated the professional duty to verify AI-generated research against authoritative sources before relying on it in legal submissions.

Artificial Intelligence (AI): Guidance for Judicial Office Holders, April 2025 (PDF) - Courts and Tribunals Judiciary

Updated judicial guidance on the responsible use of AI tools, outlining key terminology, use cases, potential risks (e.g. bias, hallucinations) and steps to mitigate them while safeguarding the integrity of the justice system.

<https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Refreshed-AI-Guidance-published-version-website-version.pdf>

12. Sources of Law

In England and Wales, law comes from two main sources: legislation passed by Parliament and legal precedents in the form of decided cases.

The following resources include free sources of legal materials, including transcripts of judgments and Acts of Parliament.

12.1 Legislation

Understanding Legislation - [legislation.gov.uk](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

Explains how UK legislation is structured and interpreted, distinguishing between primary and secondary legislation. It also covers how laws are published, how to read sections and schedules, and the importance of understanding amendments and commencement dates.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/understanding-legislation>

BAILII (The British and Irish Legal Information Institute)

Coverage of UK legislation include many Acts and Statutory Instruments.

https://www.bailii.org/uk/legis/num_act/

Legislation.gov.uk

Legislation.gov.uk carries most (but not all) types of legislation and their accompanying explanatory documents.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/>

12.2 Case Law

Case law refers to legal principles and rules established through judicial decisions, forming a key part of the common law system alongside legislation. Cases can be found in published series of law reports or as transcripts of judgments.

What's the Difference Between a "Law Report" and a "Transcript"? - Incorporated Council of Law Reporting (ICLR)

Explains the key differences between a court transcript and a law report, highlighting their purposes, formats and roles in legal citation.

<https://www.iclr.co.uk/blog/archive/whats-the-difference-between-a-law-report-and-a-transcript/>

12.2.1 Law Reports

The Law Reports

Published by the Incorporated Council of Law Reporting (ICLR), the Law Reports are the most authoritative, or official, series of law reports.

The Weekly Law Reports

'The reports cover decisions of all the senior courts of England and Wales, including all divisions of the High Court and Court of Appeal, the UK Supreme Court (previously the House of Lords), the Privy Council, the European Court of Justice and senior tribunals such as the Upper Tribunal, Employment Appeal Tribunal, and Competition Appeal Tribunal.'

Other law report titles are listed here:

Guide to UK Law Reports and Their Citations - Incorporated Council of Law Reporting (ICLR)

<https://www.iclr.co.uk/knowledge/guides/guide-to-uk-law-reports-and-their-citations/>

12.2.2 Transcripts of Judgments

BAILII (The British and Irish Legal Information Institute)

BAILII's case law collection includes significant judgments from the higher courts of the UK mostly since the mid-1990s, with expanding coverage of historic decisions.

https://www.bailii.org/uk/legis/num_act/

Courts and Tribunals Judiciary: Tribunal Decisions

Links to the decisions available via the websites of individual tribunals.

<https://www.judiciary.uk/judgments/tribunal-decisions/>

Courts and Tribunals Judiciary: Judgments

Judgments searchable by keyword, with options to filter by judgment type, court or tribunal and date.

<https://www.judiciary.uk/judgments/>

House of Lords Judgments (1996-2009)

Precursor to the Supreme Court.

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld/ldjudgmt.htm>

National Archives: Find Case Law

Find Case Law by The National Archives, provides free public access to selected court judgments and tribunal decisions in England and Wales dating from around 2001 onwards, though it is not a complete record and remains in active development.

<https://caselaw.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>

Supreme Court

Decided cases of the Supreme Court.

<https://www.supremecourt.uk/decided-cases/index.html>

13. Commentary Sources

Commentary sources are useful because they help explain, interpret and contextualise primary legal materials like statutes and case law. They can help clarify complex areas of law, making them especially valuable for understanding how the law is applied in practice.

The availability of these works in public libraries is very limited. You are more likely to find them in academic libraries' collections, but access will be dependent on each library's admissions policy. See the section on [Academic Libraries](#) for more information.

13.1 Halsbury's Laws of England

Halsbury's Laws of England is an authoritative multi-volume encyclopedia of the law of England & Wales, arranged by subject.

It is a massive work, currently over 100 volumes, and is more likely to be found in an academic library (see [Academic Library Access](#)) although some larger public libraries may have this and you will find others have the odd volume on a specific topic so it is worth searching their catalogues (see [Public Libraries](#)).

13.2 Practitioner Texts

Practitioner texts are not easy to read and they are hugely expensive. The following titles, whilst being key works in civil, criminal and family law, are not going to be accessible to everyone, but it is good to have an awareness of their existence. All of the texts listed below are published annually.

Archbold: Criminal Pleading, Evidence & Practice

'The leading criminal court book for the Crown Court.'

Blackstone's Criminal Practice

'Blackstone's Criminal Practice brings together an expert team of authors with a commitment to deliver a work which offers detailed and insightful coverage for criminal practice and authoritative statements of the law in a practical and accessible format.'

Civil Procedure

(commonly referred to as the 'White Book')

'The White Book contains the sources of law relating to the practice and procedures of the High Court and the County Court for the handling of civil litigation, subject to the Civil Procedure Rules (CPR), and is supplemented by substantial and comprehensive expert commentary. The White Book is relied upon in court by more judges and lawyers than any other legal text and is trusted for its authority and commentary.'

Family Court Practice

(also known as the 'Red Book')

The Family Court Practice (Red Book), covers the entire range of family business and contains all the essential materials you need to practice in the Family Court.

13.3 Handbooks

Handbooks can provide a slightly more accessible way of engaging with legal topics. They are designed to provide a very practical, subject specific one-stop shop

Benefits for Migrants Handbook, 15th ed. (Child Poverty Action Group, 2024) RRP £52.50

Butterworths Employment Law Handbook, 33rd ed. (LexisNexis, 2025) RRP £391.00 [Published annually]

Child Support Handbook 2024-25, 32nd ed. (Child Poverty Action Group, 2024) RRP £52.50 [Note: new edition due 2025]

Cohabitation Law & Practice Handbook, 3rd ed. by Graeme Fraser (Resolution, 2025) RRP £85.00

Council Tax Handbook, 15th ed. (Child Poverty Action Group, 2024) RRP £40.50 [Note: new edition due 2025]

Court of Protection Handbook: A User's Guide, 4th ed. by Alex Ruck Keene, Kate Edwards, Nicola Macintosh and Sophy Miles (Legal Action Group, 2022) RRP £85.00

Criminal Appeals Handbook, 2nd ed. by Joel Bennathan, Rebecca Trowler & Gregory Stewart (Bloomsbury Professional, 2019) RRP £80.00 [new edition due in 2026]

Debt Advice Handbook, 15th ed. (Child Poverty Action Group, 2024) RRP £49.50 [new edition due in 2026]

Defending Possession Proceedings, 9th ed by Jan Luba QC, Ann Bevington, John Gallagher, Sam Madge-Wyld, Sarah Steinhardt (LAG, 2022) RRP £85.00

Disabled Children: A Legal Handbook, 3rd ed. by Stephen Broach, Luke Clements (LAG, 2020) RRP £60.00

Discrimination in Housing Law by David Renton (LAG, 2024) RRP £65.00

Disability Rights Handbook 2025/2026 (Disability Rights UK, 2025) RRP £48.00 [Published annually]

Domestic Abuse and Housing Law by Liz Davies KC, Sue James, Marina Sergides, Cris McCurley (LAG, 2025) RRP £70.00 [Publishing September 2025]

Employment Law: An Adviser's Handbook, 14th ed by Tamara Lewis (LAG, 2022) RRP £70.00

Housing Conditions: Tenants' Rights, 6th ed. by Jan Luba, Giles Peaker, and Catherine O'Donnell (LAG, 2019) RRP £70.00

Housing Law Handbook, 5th ed by Diane Astin (LAG, 2023) RRP £85.00

Housing Law Handbook: A Practical Guide, 2nd ed. by Stephen Cottle (The Law Society, 2020) RRP £95.00 [new edition due in 2025]

International Family Law Handbook (Resolution, 2025) RRP £85.00

Legal Action Handbook 2024/2025 by Vicky Ling, Sue James and Simon Mullings (LAG, 2024) RRP £85.00

Mental Health and Benefits Handbook (Child Poverty Action Group, 2023) RRP £38.50 [Note: new edition due 2025]

Migrant Support Handbook by Shu Shin Luh and Connor Johnston (LAG, 2023) RRP £95.00

NHS Law and Practice, 2nd ed. by David Lock KC, Hannah Gibbs and Leon Glenister (LAG, 2024) £95.00

Spousal Maintenance Handbook ed. Jack Rundall & Farhana Shahzady (Resolution, 2024) RRP £85.00

Tolley's Employment Handbook, 39th ed. (LexisNexis, 2025) RRP. £391.00 [Published annually]

Tribunal Practice and Procedure: Tribunals under the Tribunals, Courts and Enforcement Act 2007, 6th ed. by Edward Jacobs (LAG, 2024) RRP £80.00

Welfare Benefits Handbook 2025-26, 27th ed. (Child Poverty Action Group, 2025) RRP £82.50 [Published annually]

13.4 Manuals

13.4.1 Bar Manuals

Published by Oxford University Press to support people studying for the Bar.

Advocacy, 22nd ed. edited by Snigdha Nag (Oxford University Press, 2024) RRP £42.99

Drafting, 22nd ed. edited by David Emmet (Oxford University Press, 2022) RRP £42.99

Evidence, 21st ed. edited by Romilly Edge & Alexia Zimble (Oxford University Press, 2022) RRP £42.99

Opinion Writing and Case Preparation, 8th ed. edited by Nigel Duncan & Allison Wolfgarten (Oxford University Press, 2024) RRP £42.99

13.4.2 CLP Legal Practice Guides

Practice Guides published by College of Law Publishing (CLP). A full list of those published can be found via the publisher's website:

<https://clp-bookshop.co.uk/collections/frontpage>

Civil Litigation 2025/26 by Kevin Browne (CLP, 2025) RRP £39.99

Criminal Litigation 2025/26 by Deborah Sharpley (CLP Publishing, 2025) RRP £39.99

Employment Law 2025 by Gillian Phillips & Karen Scott (CLP Publishing, 2025) RRP £38.99

Family Law and Practice 2024 b5 Nancy Duffield, Jacqueline Kempton & Christa Sabine (CLP Publishing, 2025) RRP £38.99

Immigration Law 2025 by Kevin Browne (CLP Publishing, 2025) RRP £38.99

Legal Foundations 2025/26 by Keir Bamford (CLP Publishing, 2025) RRP £39.99

Skills for Lawyers 2025/26 by Kevin Browne et al. (CLP Publishing, 2025) RRP £39.99

14. Introductory Works

'In very general terms there are practitioner texts, student texts, and more simple guides or 'nutshells'. Practitioner texts are likely to be hard going for a litigant with no legal training [...] Student books should be more digestible.'

- A Handbook for Litigants in Person (2013)

Most of the textbooks listed here are intended for students, though some are suitable for general readers, and others function as manuals offering accessible introductions to complex legal topics.

Since legal textbooks are frequently updated, it's important to check that you're using the latest edition. They can also be very expensive, so always check the catalogues of the libraries to which you have access. If you do consider purchasing any book, it's a good idea to browse before doing so. If you can't access a physical copy, publishers' websites or platforms like Google Books may offer previews or contents pages to help you decide.

The titles included here are deemed potentially of use, but this is not intended as an endorsement or recommendation to purchase. RRP's are included for reference.

14.1 Introductions to the Legal System

Derbyshire on the English Legal System, 12th ed. by Penny Derbyshire (Sweet & Maxwell, 2025) Out of Print [new edition due 2025]

Elliott & Quinn's English Legal System, 22nd ed. by Emily Allbon and Sanmeet Kaur-Dua (Pearson, 2024) RRP £42.99

The English Legal System, 9th ed. by Alisdair Gillespie and Siobhan Weare (Oxford University Press, 2023) RRP £45.99 [new edition due 2025]

English Legal System, 6th ed. by Helen Rutherford, Birju Kotecha and Angela Mcfarlane (Oxford University Press, 2024) RRP £45.99

English Legal System: The Fundamentals, 5th ed. by Michael Bromby (Sweet & Maxwell, 2022) RRP £31.95 [new edition due 2025]

A Guide to the English Legal System, Revised edition by Anthony Chadwick (Emerald Guides, 2023) RRP £9.99

Introduction to the English Legal System, 15th ed. by Martin Partington (Oxford University Press, 2021) RRP £29.99

Key Facts, Key Cases: English Legal System by Jacqueline Martin (Routledge, 2013) RRP 37.99

Legal Systems and Skills, 5th ed. by Scott Slorach, Judith Embley, Catherine Shephard and Peter Goodchild (Oxford University Press, 2023) RRP £42.99

Nutshells English Legal System, 10th ed. by Penny Derbyshire
(Sweet & Maxwell, 2016) RRP £14.95

Slapper & Kelly's The English Legal System, 20th ed. by David
Kelly (Routledge, 2024) RRP £41.99

Unlocking the English Legal System, 8th ed. by Tom Frost et al.
(Routledge, 2025) RRP £37.99

14.2 Introductions to the Legal Skills

Be Civil! A Guide to Learning Civil Litigation and Evidence, 4th ed. by Virginia Dunn (Worth Publishing, 2023) RRP £48.00

Glanville Williams: Learning the Law, 17th ed. by A.T.H. Smith (Sweet & Maxwell, 2020) RRP £14.95

How to Study Law, 9th ed. by Anthony Bradney, Fiona Cownie, Judith Masson & Alan C. Neal (Sweet & Maxwell, 2021) RRP £21.95

The Insider's Guide to Legal Skills, 2nd ed. by Emily Allbon & Sanmeet Kaur Dua (Routledge, 2023) RRP £32.99

It's Criminal! A Guide to Learning Criminal Litigation, Evidence and Sentencing, 2nd ed. by Virginia Dunn (Worth Publishing, 2017) RRP £41.00

Learning Legal Rules: A Student's Guide to Legal Method and Reasoning, 11th ed. by James Holland & Julian Webb (Oxford University Press, 2022) RRP £39.99

Learning Legal Skills Reasoning, 5th ed. by Sharon Hanson, Tobias Kliem, Ben Waters (Routledge, 2021) RRP £46.99

Legal Skills, 10th ed by Stefan Fafinski & Emily Finch (Oxford University Press, 2025) RRP £9.99

14.2.1 Advocacy

365 Daily Advocacy Tips by Leslie Cuthbert (Bloomsbury Professional, 2015) RRP £32.99

Advocacy, 22nd ed. edited by Snigdha Nag (Oxford University Press, 2024) RRP £42.99

Mooting and Advocacy Skills, 3rd ed. by David Pope & Dan Hill (Sweet & Maxwell, 2015) RRP £21.95

On Your Feet: A Practical Guide to Civil Advocacy by Clare Elliot, Brooke Lyne, Emma Horner & Chloe Bell (Sweet & Maxwell, 2019) RRP £55.00

Practical Advocacy in the Crown Court by Susan Cavender & Mary Cowe (Bloomsbury Professional, 2020) RRP £32.99

A Practical Guide to Advocacy in Family Proceedings, 2nd ed by Stuart Barlow (Law Brief Publishing, 2024) RRP £29.99

14.2.2 Drafting

Drafting, 22nd ed. edited by David Emmet (Oxford University Press, 2022) RRP £42.99

The Lawyer's Style Guide: A Student and Practitioner Guide by Peter Butt (Hart, 2021) RRP £59.99

Pleadings Without Tears: A Guide to Legal Drafting Under the Civil Procedure Rules, 9th ed. by William Rose & Roger Eastman (Oxford University Press, 2017) RRP £46.99

Successful Legal Writing, 3rd ed. by Edwina Higgins & Laura Tatham (Sweet & Maxwell, 2015) RRP £21.95

Drafting a Persuasive Skeleton Argument - Solicitors Regulation Authority

Practical guidance on how to draft a clear, concise, and compelling skeleton argument.

<https://www.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources/advocacy/persuasive-skeleton-argument/#skeleton>

14.2.3 Preparing Bundles for Court

A court bundle is a paginated, indexed set of documents needed for a court hearing. It's usually prepared by the applicant and must be shared with the court and other parties before the hearing.

Court Bundles - Coram Child Law Advice

Explains what a court bundle is in family court. It covers who prepares it, what it must include and how it should be organised.

<https://childlawadvice.org.uk/information-pages/court-bundles/>

General Guidance on Electronic Court Bundles - Courts and Tribunals Judiciary

Detailing standardised requirements for preparing PDF bundles in civil, criminal, and family court hearings, including pagination, indexing, OCR, orientation, file size limits, bookmarking, and other formatting protocols.

<https://www.judiciary.uk/guidance-and-resources/general-guidance-on-electronic-court-bundles/>

Guidance for Litigants in Person on Compiling of Bundles for Hearing in Family Courts - Resolution

Practical advice on how to prepare a bundle for the family courts.

<https://resolution.org.uk/looking-for-help/splitting-up/your-process-options-for-divorce-and-dissolution/representing-yourself-in-court-as-a-litigant-in-person/guidance-for-litigants-in-person-on-compiling-of-bundles-for-hearing-in-family-courts/>

A Guide to Preparing a Bundle for a Family Court Hearing, 2023 (PDF) - Rights of Women

Covering what documents to include, how to organise and paginate it, timelines for agreeing and sending it and procedures for urgent hearings or when disputes arise over omitted documents

<https://www.rightsofwomen.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/a-guide-to-preparing-a-bundle-for-a-family-court-hearing.pdf>

Preparing a Trial Bundle and Index - Advicenow

A detailed guide on preparing a properly paginated and indexed trial bundle for a fast-track civil case.

<https://www.advicenow.org.uk/guides/how-prepare-trial-bundle-and-index>

14.3 Legal Publishers

A selection of some of the biggest legal publishers:

Bloomsbury

<https://www.bloomsburyprofessional.com/uk/law/>

Law Brief

<https://www.lawbriefpublishing.com/>

Legal Action Group

<https://www.lag.org.uk/bookshop/by-category>

LexisNexis

<https://www.lexisnexis.co.uk/store>

Routledge

<https://www.routledge.com/law>

Sweet & Maxwell

<https://www.sweetandmaxwell.co.uk/en-gb>

Wildy, Simmonds & Hil

<https://www.wildy.com/subjects/wildy-simmonds-and-hill>

15. Reference Sources

Dictionaries and abbreviation indexes are essential tools when using legal sources because law is filled with specialised terminology and abbreviations that can be confusing.

A legal dictionary helps clarify precise meanings of terms, ensuring accurate understanding, while an abbreviation index allows users to decode legal citations.

15.1 Dictionaries

A Dictionary of Law, 10th ed. edited by Jonathan Law (Oxford University Press, 2022) RRP £13.99

Osborn's Concise Law Dictionary, 12th ed. by Mick Woodley (Sweet & Maxwell, 2013) RRP £14.95

Stroud's Judicial Dictionary of Words and Phrases, 11th ed. (Sweet & Maxwell, 2023)

Words and Phrases Legally Defined, 5th ed. (LexisNexis, 2018)

Law Dictionary - Legal Choices

<https://www.legalchoices.org.uk/law-dictionary>

15.2 Glossaries

Acronyms - Incorporated Council of Law Reporting (ICLR)

<https://www.iclr.co.uk/knowledge/glossary/acronyms-and-initialisms-in-legal-writing/>

Glossary - Incorporated Council of Law Reporting (ICLR)

<https://www.iclr.co.uk/knowledge/glossary/>

Glossary of Legal Terms - Resolution

<https://resolution.org.uk/looking-for-help/splitting-up/your-process-options-for-divorce-and-dissolution/representing-yourself-in-court-as-a-litigant-in-person/glossary-of-legal-terms/>

Legal Glossary - The Law Society

<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/public/for-public-visitors/resources/glossary>

Legal Glossary - Mind

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/legal-rights/legal-glossary/?lang=>

Legal Jargon Explained - Solicitors Regulation Authority

<https://www.sra.org.uk/consumers/choosing/legal-jargon-explained>

Legal Terms Explained - Mills & Reeve

<https://www.familylawsolicitors.org/useful-resources/legal-terms-explained/>

15.3 Legal Abbreviations

Index to Legal Citations and Abbreviations, 4th ed. by Donald Raistrick (Sweet & Maxwell, 2013)

Cardiff Index to Legal Abbreviations - Cardiff University

Free index hosted by Cardiff University, enabling users to decipher legal abbreviations. Can be searched by abbreviation or by title.

<https://www.legalabbrevs.cardiff.ac.uk/site/index>

Citations - BAILII (British and Irish Legal Information Institute)

Outlines the neutral citation system used by UK courts and explains how to reference judgments accurately (including paragraph numbers).

<https://www.bailii.org/bailii/citation.html>

Neutral Citations - Incorporated Council of Law Reporting (ICLR)

The Incorporated Council of Law Reporting explains what a neutral citation is and lists the main ones you may encounter.

<https://www.iclr.co.uk/knowledge/case-law/neutral-citations/>

Guide to UK Law Reports and their Citations - Incorporated Council of Law Reporting (ICLR)

Lists commonly cited law reports series.

<https://www.iclr.co.uk/knowledge/guides/guide-to-uk-law-reports-and-their-citations/>

16. Public Libraries

Public libraries are often the first port of call for people without access to university or specialist law collections. They offer essential services, but their limited budgets mean they rarely hold comprehensive legal collections, making it challenging for litigants in person outside major cities to obtain even basic legal texts.

However, public libraries do have some legal texts, so always check their online catalogues because they might have material that would be very helpful to your research.

16.1 The British Library

NOTE - due to a cyber attack in October 2023, not all British Library services are available. Check their website for updates.

British Library

96 Euston Road

London

NW1 2DB

The British Library is a national library and one of the world's largest research institutions, serving as a legal deposit library and providing access to millions of books, journals, and digital resources across a wide range of subjects.

<https://www.bl.uk/>

16.2 City of London Libraries

City of London Barbican & Community Libraries.

Search Barbican & Community Libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Barbican Library

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/services/libraries/barbican-library>

Search the Barbican Library's catalogue for books with [subject: law](#)

Guildhall Library

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/history-and-heritage/guildhall-library>

Search Guildhall Library's catalogue for books with [subject: law](#)

Information on Guildhall Library's English law collection can be found here:

<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/history-and-heritage/guildhall-library/guildhall-library-collections/english-law>

16.3 Public Libraries in London Boroughs

This list covers public libraries in the London and Greater London areas. You can search for your local library services in England & Wales here:

<https://www.gov.uk/local-library-services>

Barking & Dagenham

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.lbdd.gov.uk/libraries-and-local-history/our-libraries>

Search across Barking & Dagenham libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Barnet

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/libraries-0>

Search across Barnet libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Bexley

Access information and contact details:

<https://arena.yourlondonlibrary.net/web/bexley>

Search across Bexley libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Brent

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.brent.gov.uk/libraries-arts-and-heritage/libraries>

Search across Brent libraries' catalogue for books with [subject: law](#)

Bromley

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.bromley.gov.uk/libraries>

Search across Bromley libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Camden

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.camden.gov.uk/libraries-local-studies>

Search across Camden libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Croydon

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.croydon.gov.uk/libraries-leisure-and-culture/libraries>

Search across Croydon libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Ealing

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.ealing.gov.uk/libraries>

Search across Ealing libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Enfield

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.enfield.gov.uk/services/libraries>

Search across Enfield libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Greenwich

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/info/200231/libraries>

Search across Greenwich libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Hackney

Access information and contact details:

<https://hackney.gov.uk/libraries>

Search across Hackney libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Hammersmith & Fulham

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.lbhf.gov.uk/libraries>

Search across Fulham libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Haringey

Access information and contact details:

<https://new.haringey.gov.uk/libraries>

Search across Haringey libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Harrow

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.harrow.gov.uk/libraries>

Search across Harrow libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Havering

Access information and contact details:

<https://libraries.havering.gov.uk/bookshelf>

Search across Havering libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Hillingdon

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/libraries>

Search across Hillingdon libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Hounslow

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.hounslow.gov.uk/libraries>

Search across Hounslow libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Islington

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.islington.gov.uk/libraries-arts-and-heritage/libraries>

Search across Islington libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Kensington & Chelsea

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.rbkc.gov.uk/libraries-0>

Search across Kensington & Chelsea libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Kingston-upon-Thames

Access information and contact details:

<https://libraries.kingston.gov.uk/home>

Search across Kingston-upon-Thames libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Lambeth

Access information and contact details:

<https://libraries.lambeth.gov.uk/libraries>

Search across Lambeth libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Lewisham

Access information and contact details:

<https://lewisham.gov.uk/my services/libraries>

Search across Lewisham libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Merton

Access information and contact details:

<https://libraries.merton.gov.uk/home>

Search across Merton libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Newham

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.newham.gov.uk/libraries-arts-culture/newham-library-services>

Search across Newham libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Redbridge

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.redbridge.gov.uk/libraries/>

Search across Redbridge libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Richmond-upon-Thames

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.richmond.gov.uk/services/libraries>

Search across Richmond-upon-Thames libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Southwark

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.southwark.gov.uk/culture-and-sport/libraries>

Search across Southwark libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Sutton

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.sutton.gov.uk/w/suttonlibraries>

Search across Sutton libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Tower Hamlets

Access information and contact details:

https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/ignl/leisure_and_culture/libraries/libraries.aspx

Search across Tower Hamlets libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Waltham Forest

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/libraries>

Search across Waltham Forest libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Wandsworth

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/libraries>

Search across Wandsworth libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Westminster

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.westminster.gov.uk/leisure-libraries-and-community/libraries>

Search across Westminster libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

16.4 Public Libraries Across England

This list covers libraries in England, outside of the London area. You can search for your local library services in England & Wales here:

<https://www.gov.uk/local-library-services>

Barnsley

Access information and contact details:

www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/libraries

Search across Barnsley libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Bath and North East Somerset

Access information and contact details:

www.librarieswest.org.uk/welcome

Search across Bath and North East Somerset libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Bedford

Access information and contact details:

<https://beds-arena.culturalservices.net/>

Search across Bedford and Central Bedfordshire libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Birmingham

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/libraries>

Search across Birmingham libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Blackburn with Darwen

Access information and contact details:

<https://blackburn.gov.uk/bwdlibraries>

Search across Blackburn with Darwen libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Blackpool

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Residents/Libraries-arts-and-heritage/Libraries/Blackpool-libraries.aspx>

Search across Blackpool libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Bolton

Access information and contact details:

<https://bolton.spydus.co.uk>

Search across Bolton libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole

Access information and contact details:

www.librarieswest.org.uk/welcome

Search across Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Bracknell Forest

Access information and contact details:

www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/libraries

Search across Bracknell Forest libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Bradford

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.bradford.gov.uk/libraries/libraries/>

Search across Bradford libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Brighton and Hove

Access information and contact details:

<https://brighton-hove.spydus.co.uk>

Search across Brighton and Hove libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Bristol

Access information and contact details:

www.librarieswest.org.uk/welcome

Search across Bristol libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Buckinghamshire

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/libraries/>

Search across Buckinghamshire libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Bury

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.bury.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives>

Search across Bury libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Calderdale

Access information and contact details:

<https://new.calderdale.gov.uk/libraries>

Search across Calderdale libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Cambridgeshire

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/libraries-leisure-culture/libraries>

Search across Cambridgeshire libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Chester

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/libraries>

Search across Chester libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Cornwall

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/libraries-museums-and-archives/libraries/>

Search across Cornwall libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Coventry

Access information and contact details:

<https://librarycatalogue.coventry.gov.uk/>

Search across Coventry libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Cumberland

Access information and contact details:

www.cwflibraries.org.uk

Search across Cumberland libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Darlington

Access information and contact details:

www2.darlington.gov.uk/

Search across Darlington libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Derby

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.inderby.org.uk/libraries/>

Search across Derby libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Derbyshire

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/leisure/libraries/libraries.aspx>

Search across Derbyshire libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Devon and Torbay

Access information and contact details:

www.librariesunlimited.org.uk

Search across Devon and Torbay libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Doncaster

Access information and contact details:

<https://library.doncaster.gov.uk/>

Enter as a guest, or log-in to search their catalogue.

Dorset

Access information and contact details:

www.librarieswest.org.uk/welcome

Search across Dorset libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Dudley

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.dudley.gov.uk/things-to-do/dudley-borough-libraries/>

Search across Dudley libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Durham

Access information and contact details:

www.durham.gov.uk/libraries

Enter as a guest, or log-in to search their catalogue.

East Riding

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.eastriding.gov.uk/leisure/libraries/>

Search across East Riding libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

East Sussex

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/libraries>

Search across East Sussex libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Essex

Access information and contact details:

<https://libraries.essex.gov.uk/home>

Search across Essex libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Gateshead

Access information and contact details:

www.gateshead.gov.uk/article/9643/Libraries

Search across Gateshead libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Gloucestershire

Access information and contact details:

<https://gloslibraries.uk/>

Search across Gloucestershire libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Halton

Access information and contact details:

www.library.haltonbc.info/

Search across Halton libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Hampshire

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/librariesandarchives/library>

Search across Hampshire libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Hartlepool

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/info/20012/libraries>

Search across Hartlepool libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Herefordshire

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/libraries-1>

Search across Herefordshire libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Hertfordshire

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/libraries-and-archives/libraries-and-archives.aspx>

Search across Hertfordshire libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Hull

Access information and contact details:

www.hulllibraries.co.uk

Search across Hull libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Isle of Wight

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.iow.gov.uk/libraries-leisure-and-heritage/libraries/>

Search across Isle of Wight libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Kent

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/leisure-and-community/libraries>

Search across Kent libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Kirklees

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/libraries/index.aspx>

Search across Kirklees libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Knowsley

Access information and contact details:

<https://catalogue.knowsley.gov.uk/>

Search across Knowsley libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Lancashire

Access information and contact details:

www.lancashire.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives/

Search across Lancashire libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Leeds

Access information and contact details:

https://leeds.ent.sirsiidynix.net.uk/client/en_GB/default

Search across Leeds libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Leicester

Access information and contact details:

www.leicester.gov.uk/your-community/libraries-and-community-centres/libraries/

Search across Leicester libraries for books with [keyword: law](#)

Lincolnshire

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/libraries-archives/lincolnshire-library-service>

Search across Lincolnshire libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Leicestershire

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/leisure-and-community/libraries>

Search across Leicestershire libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Liverpool

Access information and contact details:

<https://liverpool.gov.uk/libraries/>

Search across Liverpool libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Luton

Access information and contact details:

www.lutonlibraries.co.uk/home

Search across Luton libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Manchester

Access information and contact details:

www.manchester.gov.uk/info/200062/libraries

Search across Manchester libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Medway

Access information and contact details:

www.medway.gov.uk/libraries

Search across Medway libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Middlesbrough

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/community-hubs-and-libraries/>

Search across Middlesbrough libraries for books with [search the catalogue](#)

Milton Keynes

Access information and contact details:

www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/libraries

Search across Milton Keynes libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Newcastle

Access information and contact details:

<https://new.newcastle.gov.uk/libraries>

Search across Newcastle libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Norfolk

Access information and contact details:

www.norfolk.gov.uk/libraries

Search across Norfolk libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

North East Lincolnshire

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/leisure-and-things-to-do/libraries-and-archives/>

Search across North East Lincolnshire libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

North Lincolnshire

Access information and contact details:

www.northlincs.gov.uk/schools-libraries-and-learning/libraries-in-north-lincolnshire/

Search across North Lincolnshire libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

North Northamptonshire

Access information and contact details:

www.northnorthants.gov.uk/libraries

Search across North Northamptonshire libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

North Somerset

Access information and contact details:

www.librarieswest.org.uk/welcome

Search across North Somerset libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

North Tyneside

Access information and contact details:

<https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/146/libraries>

Search across North Tyneside libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

North Yorkshire

Access information and contact details:

www.northyorks.gov.uk/leisure-tourism-and-culture/libraries

Search across North Yorkshire libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Northumberland

Access information and contact details:

<https://beta.northumberland.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives>

Search across Northumberland libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Nottingham

Access information and contact details:

www.nottinghamcitylibraries.co.uk/

Search across Nottingham libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Nottinghamshire

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/culture-leisure/libraries/inspire>

Search across Nottinghamshire libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Oldham

Access information and contact details:

<https://hla.oldham.gov.uk/libraries/>

Search across Oldham libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Oxfordshire

Access information and contact details:

www.libcat.oxfordshire.gov.uk/web/arena/welcome

Search across Oxfordshire libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Peterborough

Access information and contact details:

www.peterboroughlibraries.org.uk/

Search across Peterborough libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Plymouth

Access information and contact details:

www.plymouth.gov.uk/libraries

Search across Plymouth libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Portsmouth

Access information and contact details:

www.portsmouth.gov.uk/services/libraries/

Search across Portsmouth libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Reading

Access information and contact details:

www.reading.gov.uk/leisure/libraries/

Search across Reading libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Redcar and Cleveland

Access information and contact details:

www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk/libraries

Search across Redcar and Cleveland libraries for books with [search the catalogue](#)

Rochdale

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.rochdale.gov.uk/libraries>

Search across Rochdale libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Rotherham

Access information and contact details:

www.rotherham.gov.uk/libraries

Search across Rotherham libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Rutland

Access information and contact details:

www.rutlandlibraries.org.uk/

Search across Rutland libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

St Helens

Access information and contact details:

www.sthelens.gov.uk/article/1929/Library-Services

Search across St Helens libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Salford

Access information and contact details:

www.salford.gov.uk/libraries/

Search across Salford libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Sandwell

Access information and contact details:

www.sandwell.gov.uk/libraries

Search across Sandwell libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Sefton

Access information and contact details:

www.sefton.gov.uk/libraries

Search across Sefton libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Sheffield

Access information and contact details:

www.sheffield.gov.uk/libraries-archives

Search across Sheffield libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Shropshire

Access information and contact details:

<https://next.shropshire.gov.uk/libraries/>

Search across Shropshire libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Slough

Access information and contact details:

www.slough.gov.uk/libraries

Search across Slough libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Solihul

Access information and contact details:

www.solihull.gov.uk/libraries

Search across Solihull libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Somerset

Access information and contact details:

www.librarieswest.org.uk/welcome

Search across Somerset libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Southampton

Access information and contact details:

www.southampton.gov.uk/libraries/

Search across Southampton libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

South Gloucestershire

Access information and contact details:

www.librarieswest.org.uk/welcome

Search across South Gloucestershire libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

South Tyneside

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.southtyneside.gov.uk/article/943/Libraries>

Search across South Tyneside libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Southend-on-Sea

Access information and contact details:

www.southend.gov.uk/libraries-1

Search across Southend-on-Sea libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Staffordshire

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Libraries/libraries.aspx>

Search across Staffordshire libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Stockport

Access information and contact details:

www.stockport.gov.uk/topic/libraries

Search across Stockport libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Stockton-on-Tees

Access information and contact details:

www.stockton.gov.uk/article/1404/Libraries-and-archives

Search across Stockton-on-Tees libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Stoke-on-Trent

Access information and contact details:

www.stoke.gov.uk/info/20036/libraries

Search across Stoke-on-Trent libraries for books with [search the catalogue](#)

Suffolk

Access information and contact details:

<https://suffolkcommunitylibraries.co.uk/>

Search across Suffolk libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Sunderland

Access information and contact details:

www.sunderland.gov.uk/libraries

Search across Sunderland libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Surrey

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/libraries>

Search across Surrey libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Swindon

Access information and contact details:

www.swindon.gov.uk/info/20026/libraries

Search across Swindon libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Tameside

Access information and contact details:

www.tameside.gov.uk/libraries

Search across Tameside libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Telford and Wrekin

Access information and contact details:

www.telford.gov.uk/libraries

Search across Telford and Wrekin libraries for books with
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Thurrock

Access information and contact details:

www.thurrock.gov.uk/libraries

Search across Thurrock libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Trafford

Access information and contact details:

www.trafford.gov.uk/residents/leisure-and-lifestyle/libraries/libraries.aspx

Search across Trafford libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Wakefield

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.wakefield.gov.uk/libraries-and-local-history/library-information>

Search across Wakefield libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Walsall

Access information and contact details:

<https://go.walsall.gov.uk/walsall-libraries>

Search across Walsall libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Warrington

Access information and contact details:

www.warrington.gov.uk/libraries

Search across Warrington libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Warwickshire

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/libraries>

Search across Warwickshire libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

West Berkshire

Access information and contact details:

www.westberks.gov.uk/libraries

Search across West Berkshire libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

West Northamptonshire

Access information and contact details:

www.westnorthants.gov.uk/libraries

Search across West Northamptonshire libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

West Sussex

Access information and contact details:

<https://arena.westsussex.gov.uk/>

Search across West Sussex libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Westmorland and Furness

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives>

Search across Westmorland and Furness libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Wigan

Access information and contact details:

www.wigan.gov.uk/Resident/Libraries/index.aspx

Search across Wigan libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Wiltshire

Access information and contact details:

<https://libraries.wiltshire.gov.uk/#/>

Search across Wiltshire libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Windsor and Maidenhead

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.rbwm.gov.uk/leisure-and-culture/libraries>

Search across Windsor and Maidenhead libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Wirral

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives>

Search across Wirral libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Wokingham

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/libraries>

Search across Wokingham libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Wolverhampton

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/libraries>

Search across Wolverhampton libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

Worcestershire

Access information and contact details:

<https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/council-services/worcestershire-libraries>

Search across Worcestershire libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

York

Access information and contact details:

www.exploreyork.org.uk/

Search across York libraries for books with [subject: law](#)

17. Academic Library Access

Academic library access for non-members varies by institution but can include options for:

- Local community access
- Temporary passes
- Memberships
- Access at the Librarian's discretion.

Conditions and Restrictions:

- Often access will be reference only, meaning you can consult materials on-site but not borrow them.
- Access to digital resources, including legal and academic databases, is generally not available to visitors due to licensing restrictions.
- Visitor use of computers and Wi-Fi is usually restricted or unavailable.
- Some libraries charge for visitor access but hardship exemptions may apply

Things to check before you visit to avoid delays or denied access:

- Contact the library ahead of your visit to check access terms and conditions.
- Registration forms and identification are often required, ensure you have the relevant information.
- Some visitor access is restricted to consulting materials that can't be obtained elsewhere. In these instances be prepared to identify what you want to consult.
- Use the library's online catalogue to check their holdings
- Visitor access may be limited during busy periods, such as exam seasons.
- Not all branches or campuses are open to visitors. Make sure you know which location permits access.

17.1 Academic Libraries in London

Information was correct at the time of publishing, but it is strongly advised that you check with the library service ahead of visiting.

Birkbeck

Members of the public can apply for access for a fee. Passes can be purchased for a day, week, month or year.

<https://www.bbk.ac.uk/library/membership>

Brunel

There are two types of external membership available: reference membership or borrowing membership.

<https://www.brunel.ac.uk/life/library/Visitors>

Goldsmiths University

Local residents in the Lewisham area can apply for reference access.

<https://www.gold.ac.uk/library/using/visitors-and-alumni/>

Imperial College London

'Independent researchers who can demonstrate a genuine research need to access materials not easily available elsewhere can apply to use the Abdus Salam Library.'

<https://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/library/use-the-library/membership/visitors/>

King's College London

Members of the public can apply for access if they can demonstrate a need to use print material not easily available elsewhere. *'Before submitting your application, please check if the material you would like to access is available in the British Library catalogue.'*

<https://libanswers.kcl.ac.uk/faq/254055>

Kingston University

Individual memberships are available for non-Kingston Borough residents for a fee, for periods of 6 or 12 months. Membership rates for residents of Kingston Borough are discounted.

<https://www.kingston.ac.uk/experience/our-campuses/library-and-learning-services>

London School of Economics (LSE)

Independent researchers can apply for access for 4-12 weeks, but will need to identify the collections they need to consult.

<https://www.lse.ac.uk/library/using-the-library/visitor-access-to-lse-library-and-archive>

London Metropolitan University

Members of the public can apply for reference access for 1 year, 3 months, 1 month, 1 week or for a day. A sliding scale of fees apply.

<https://libguides.londonmet.ac.uk/using-the-library/visitors-alumni>

London Southbank University

Reference only access to the main library on the Southwark campus is available for a fee for either 6 or 12 months.

<https://library.lsbu.ac.uk/library-services/external-visitors>

Queen Mary

Access is available to independent researchers who are *'able to demonstrate a genuine research need for physical resources'* in Queen Mary collections and which are not accessible elsewhere.

<https://www.qmul.ac.uk/library/using-library-services/visitors/>

Roehampton University

Community memberships are available for reference only access.

<https://www.roehampton.ac.uk/student-support/library/visitors-to-the-library/>

Royal Holloway

Members of the public can apply for library membership, with borrowing rights for a fee, for either 4 or 12 month periods.

<https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/about-us/the-library/external-users/>

St Mary's University, Twickenham

'Members of the public who are not in Higher Education are welcome to use St Mary's Library on a reference-only basis.'

<https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/library/additional-information/information-for-visitors.aspx>

Senate House Library (University of London)

Reference only day tickets are available to purchase, or applications can be made for reference membership for either 1 week, 6 months or 1 year. A sliding scale of fees apply.

<https://www.london.ac.uk/about/services/senate-house-library/library-membership/members-public>

SOAS

Membership options for the general public include: reference only access, or paid membership with borrowing rights, for periods of 6 or 12 months.

<https://www.soas.ac.uk/use-library>

University College London

Private researchers and members of the public can apply for access for reference purposes, for a day, a week, a month, six months or a year. A sliding scale of fees apply.

<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/library/using-library/membership-services/external-users/membership-all-other-users#private-researchers>

University of West London

Access is available for residents of Ealing and Hounslow

<https://www.uwl.ac.uk/current-students/library/about-library/library-services-residents-ealing-hounslow>

17.2 Academic Libraries Across England

Information was correct at the time of publishing, but it is strongly advised that you check with the library service ahead of visiting.

Bath Spa University

Members of the public can use the library for reference only, or apply for an external borrower membership for a fee.

<https://www.bathspa.ac.uk/library/access-and-services/>

Bedfordshire University

You will need to check whether they are currently receiving applications, but if so applications can be made for reference use as a visitor (for a fee). Access is free for 'Resident's Groups'. All applications must be made via their online form.

<https://lrweb.beds.ac.uk/libraryservices/membership/visitors/categories/>

Birmingham Newman University

Members of the public can *'join the Library for up to a year, and renew annually'*, this allows users to borrow books.

<https://libguides.newman.ac.uk/home/using/join>

Bournemouth University

'If you live in the BH postcode area you can apply for reference membership, which allows members of the public to use study space in the library and [...] printed resources'. In addition there are options to pay for a membership with borrowing rights.

<https://www.bournemouth.ac.uk/students/library/guest-visitor-information>

Cambridge University

Private researchers are admitted for reference only. *'Temporary tickets valid for seven consecutive days within any twelve month period are free of charge.'* There is a sliding scale of charges for longer access tickets (1, 6, 12 months or 3 years).

<https://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/register/who-can-use-library>

Canterbury Christ Church University

Reference access is available by application, restrictions on use apply. Read the visitor access policy for further information.

<https://www.canterbury.ac.uk/library-services/about-us>

Durham University

'There is no charge for reference only access. If you are not a member of the University and you wish to borrow books from the Library, you can register as a subscription borrower.' A paid subscription includes borrowing rights.

<https://durham.ac.uk/departments/library/using/visitors/#V0004>

Edgehill University

Visitors and members of the public may use the University Library in Catalyst on the Ormskirk Campus for individual research and study. During the helpdesk opening hours, visitors can access the library and consult print materials for reference use only.

<https://www.edgehill.ac.uk/departments/support/ls/library/visitors-and-membership/>

Keele University

Members of the public, needing to use the library for 'academic purposes' can apply to join as an external borrower for an annual fee. This allows users to borrow up to four books during staffed hours. Alternatively, day visitor passes are available. Note that this requires photo ID.

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/library/usingthelibrary/borrowing/#membership>

Leeds Trinity University

Members of the public living or working within the postcodes: LS1-29; BD1-24; HG1-5; WF1-17; YO: 1, 8,10,19,23,24,26,30-32,51,61,90-91 can apply for local resident membership which is valid for up to 3 years.

<https://library.leedstrinity.ac.uk/external-members/local-residents>

Liverpool Hope University

Reference only access is free to all visitors. Borrowing rights, for a fee, are available to members of 'Liverpool Libraries Together' and members of local public libraries. Other visitors who do not fall into these categories, but who can demonstrate 'a clear need' to use the library, can apply to do so, there is an associated fee.

<https://www.hope.ac.uk/library/accessforexternalusers>

Liverpool John Moores University

Reference only access to Aldham Robarts Library and the Avril Robarts Library is available, or an application can be made for external membership to LJMU Library for members of the public with '*a genuine need to use the libraries*'.

<https://www.ljmu.ac.uk/library/visiting/visitors>

Loughborough University

Reference access is available to members of the public. Some restrictions apply. *'Members of the public who live in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland may apply for an external borrowing ticket free of charge.'*

<https://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/library/topics/joining-the-library/>

Manchester Metropolitan University

Members of the public who already have a public library card can gain reference access during weekends and the Summer months.

<https://www.mmu.ac.uk/library/using-the-library/visitors#ai-39528-5>

Newcastle University

'Occasional visitors are welcome to consult our collections if materials are not readily available elsewhere.' Applications for extended access can be made, but applicants will need to give reasons why they would like to access the library collections and resources.

<https://www.ncl.ac.uk/library/in-the-community/joining-the-library/>

Northumbria University

Temporary visitor passes are available to members of the public for use of the City Campus and Coach Lane Libraries for reference purposes. Alternatively, if extended access is needed, you can apply for a reference only 'Smartcards'.

<https://library.northumbria.ac.uk/info-visitors>

Plymouth Marjon University

Community members can access the library on a reference only basis.

<https://www.marjon.ac.uk/student-life/library/library-essentials/information-for-visitors/>

Oxford Brookes University

Members of the public can use the library for reference purposes.

<https://www.brookes.ac.uk/library/access-and-accessibility/visitor-access>

Solent University

Members of the public can apply for a reference only visitors pass which is valid for one year.

<https://libguides.solent.ac.uk/loans/visitors>

Sheffield Hallam University

Reference access for short periods (e.g. a day) are available with relevant ID, alternatively you can apply for an associate membership.

<https://libguides.shu.ac.uk/visitors>

Teeside University

'Community membership' is available for an annual fee and allows users to borrow.

https://libguides.tees.ac.uk/information_for/public_access

University of Bath

Members of the public may visit the Library during weekends and university holidays. Paid annual memberships with borrowing rights are also available.

<https://www.bath.ac.uk/guides/library-services-for-visitors/>

University of Birmingham

'Members of the public over the age of 18 are entitled to ten visits in a twelve-month period.'

<https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/libraries/visitors/membership-access-visitors>

University of Bolton

Bolton Public Libraries members can get access to the study space in the Library by *'filling out a form, getting it stamped by your local Library'* and then setting up an account via the University Library Helpdesk.

<https://libguides.bolton.ac.uk/visitors>

University of Bradford

'Members of the public may be granted special access to consult specific books or journals to which there is no other reasonable local access.' Standard memberships (reference only) and Borrower memberships are available for an annual fee.

<https://www.bradford.ac.uk/library/contact-and-about-us/visitor-access/#d.en.45095>

University of Brighton

Public membership, with borrowing rights, is available for a fee.

<https://www.brighton.ac.uk/brighton-students/your-learning/study-resources/libraries-and-computing/index.aspx#>

University of Bristol

Day reader tickets are available, giving access to the Arts and Social Sciences Library for reference purposes only.

<https://www.bristol.ac.uk/library/use/visitor-access/day-reader/>

University of Central Lancashire

Visitors can use the Preston Campus Library for reference purposes outside of exam time (usually March-May). *'Access is subject to showing appropriate forms of identification at the reception desk.'*

<https://www.lancashire.ac.uk/about-us/library-services>

University of Cumbria

Visitors can apply to use the campus libraries for reference purposes or join the library to borrow (fees apply)

<https://www.cumbria.ac.uk/student-life/student-support/library-services/>

University of Derby

Community access is available upon application and you will need to specify a date and time to visit.

<https://libguides.derby.ac.uk/external>

University of East Anglia

Visitors to UEA Library cannot borrow items unless they purchase external membership or access-only membership.

<https://uea-uk.libguides.com/visitors-uea-library>

University of Gloucestershire

Independent researchers and local residents can apply for membership, with borrowing rights, for an annual fee.

<https://www.glos.ac.uk/information/knowledge-base/external-memberships-guide/>

University of Huddersfield

Members of the public can use the library for reference purposes, there is no charge for this.

<https://library.hud.ac.uk/pages/librarypublicaccess/>

University of Hull

Members of the public can apply for a day visitor's ticket, but note that these are limited and at busy times a waiting list may be introduced.

<https://www.hull.ac.uk/choose-hull/study-at-hull/library/visitors/day-visitors>

University of Kent

Visitors have the option of applying for a borrower member 'KentOne Card', a Visitor Card or a Day Card. Borrower memberships (3 or 12 months) are also available for a fee.

<https://www.kent.ac.uk/guides/library-and-it-services-for-visitors>

University of Leeds

Access is available to *'external visitors who have an information or study need that can be met by [the library's] facilities'*.

Options available include: paid annual membership with borrowing rights, or reference only day visitor tickets.

<https://library.leeds.ac.uk/info/1206/join-the-library/30/who-can-use-the-library/12>

University of Leicester

'Members of the public aged 18 or over living or working in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland are entitled to free borrowing membership'. Note that some exceptions apply.

<https://le.ac.uk/library/using/joining>

University of Manchester

Community memberships, with borrowing rights, are available on an annual basis.

<https://stories.manchester.ac.uk/community-membership/>

University of Northampton

Associate Membership (personal research/borrowing) is available for a fee.

<https://libguides.northampton.ac.uk/visitor/associate>

University of Nottingham

Members of the public can apply for a visitor card which provides access to some of the library services.

<https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/library/using/visitors/index.aspx>

University of Plymouth

Members of the public can apply for a reference only visitor card which allows for 15 visits per annum.

<https://plymouth.libguides.com/LibandITSelfHelp/Visitors>

University of Portsmouth

Members of the public can obtain a day ticket or apply for external member access, with borrowing rights, for a period of 12 months.

<https://library.port.ac.uk/w907>

University of Reading

Members of the public who live or work in Reading can apply for an annual subscription membership which includes borrowing rights. Note that this is at the discretion of the University Librarian.

<https://www.reading.ac.uk/library/using-the-library/joining-the-library>

University of Sheffield

Visitors can apply to use the campus library for reference purposes, or apply for a borrower membership (fees apply).

<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/library/visitors/membership#public>

University of Southampton

Members of the public can use the libraries for reference purposes.

<https://library.soton.ac.uk/customer-service/visit>

University of Suffolk

'Members of the public who require access to resources not available through the public library service may join the University of Suffolk Library for an annual fee'.

<https://libguides.uos.ac.uk/become-a-member/public>

University of Surrey

Members of the public can apply for a visitors pass (unavailable during exam periods) which allows use of the library for reference purposes.

<https://www.surrey.ac.uk/library/visit-us>

University of Sussex

Members of the public can apply for an external reference membership (free) or an external borrowing membership (fees apply).

<https://www.sussex.ac.uk/library/using-the-library/visitors/public>

University of Warwick

Members of the public can apply for a Day Visitor Pass for reference access during staffed hours. To borrow books, an application can be made for a Community Membership, valid for up to 12 months.

<https://warwick.ac.uk/services/library/using/visiting/>

University of West England

Visitor access is available, but note that *'new memberships cannot be processed during April, May, September or October as this is a busy time for [...] staff and students.'*

<https://www.uwe.ac.uk/study/library/using-the-library/visitor-access>

University of Worcester

'As a member of the public you have access to a number of University of Worcester resources in The Hive. This is a result of our partnership with Worcester County Council.' This also allows users to borrow.

<https://library.worc.ac.uk/the-public-alumni-other-universities-and-schools>

University of York

Members of the public can gain access for reference purposes. *'If your post code begins YO you can apply for a York Community Membership.'* This includes borrowing rights.

www.york.ac.uk/library/visit/external/

York St John University

Members of the public can apply for a 12 month membership, with borrowing rights, for a fee.

<https://www.yorks.j.ac.uk/library/welcome-to-the-library/membership/>

18. Open Access Materials

Open Access refers to free online resources, such as journal articles, books or chapters, that anyone can read without needing to subscribe or pay a fee.

There are several platforms where you can find Open Access materials. While their usefulness will vary depending on the type of legal research you're conducting, they are worth exploring.

Some of the most valuable Open Access content is found on the academic publishers platforms where prominent legal journals which, although subscription based, regularly make a number of articles from each issue free to read.

18.1 Open Access Books & Chapters

Bloomsbury Collections

Search [Open Access law books](#)

Bristol University Press

Search [Open Access law books](#)

Cambridge University Press (CUP)

Search CUP [Open Access law books](#).

Cambridge University Press (CUP)

Search CUP law books for [Open Access chapters](#).

doab (Directory of Open Access Books)

<https://www.doabooks.org/en>

OAPEN Open Access Publishing in European Networks)

<https://www.oapen.org/>

Oxford University Press (OUP)

Search OUP [Open Access law books](#).

Oxford University Press (OUP)

Search OUP law books for [Open Access chapters](#).

University of London Press

Search [Open Access law books](#)

18.2 Open Access Journals & Articles

Access to Research

Access to Research gives anyone in the UK free walk-in access to over 30 million academic articles in participating public libraries via library terminals. Participating libraries can be located via the [interactive map](#).

<https://www.accesstoresearch.org.uk/>

Cambridge University Press (CUP)

Search CUP law journals for [Open Access articles](#)

DOAJ (Directory of Open Access Journals)

Search [Open Access law journals](#)

Oxford University Press (OUP)

Search OUP law journals for [Open Access articles](#)

Taylor & Francis

Search Taylor and Francis law journals for [Open Access articles](#)

19. Free Online Courses

Free online courses from platforms like FutureLearn, Coursera, and the Open University's OpenLearn can be a great way to familiarise yourself with a topic.

They often feature audio and video explainers, along with other introductory materials that can help provide valuable context and background information.

You can also explore materials without having to complete an entire course, so you can pick and choose what might be useful to you.

19.1 Online Learning Platforms

Coursera

Founded by two professors from Stanford University, Coursera partners with universities and companies offering courses, professional certificates and degrees, many of which are free to audit.

<https://www.coursera.org>

edX

Originally founded by Harvard and MIT, edX offers thousands of university-level courses and professional certificates from partner institutions.

<https://www.edx.org/>

FutureLearn

Offering short courses, microcredentials and full degrees in partnership with global universities and institutions.

<https://www.futurelearn.com/>

OpenLearn

Created by the Open University, the OpenLearn platform hosts free short courses which learners can study at their own pace.

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/free-courses/full-catalogue>

19.2 Law Related Courses

The courses listed here were available at the time of publishing. See the list of [Online Learning Platforms](#) to search for alternatives.

Applying Social Work Law to Asylum and Immigration - OpenLearn

This course provides an overview of the policy and law related to social work with individuals in the asylum and immigration system.

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/society-politics-law/applying-social-work-law-asylum-and-immigration/>

Applying Social Work Law with Children and Families - OpenLearn

Covers the laws relevant to social work with children and families. It covers definitions of childhood and family, key legal principles such as child rights and parental responsibilities, and related legislation.

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/society-politics-law/applying-social-work-law-children-and-families/>

Citizenship and the Rule of Law - Coursera

Created in conjunctions with the University of London and run by the Bingham Centre, it guides learners through key principles, including judicial independence, access to justice and international human rights law.

<https://www.coursera.org/learn/citizenship-rule-of-law>

Company Law in Context - OpenLearn

Created by the College of Law, this course offers a straightforward introduction to key legal concepts such as companies, partnerships, assets, and liabilities.

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/society-politics-law/company-law-context>

From Crime to Punishment: an Introduction to Criminal Justice - FutureLearn

Developed in partnership with the University of York, this course is structured around a case study of a crime and tracing the related investigation, prosecution, trial and sentencing.

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/crime-to-punishment>

How to Become a Lawyer - FutureLearn

From the University of Law, this introduction to legal careers covers topics such as qualifying law degrees, conversion routes, vocational training (LPC, SQE, BPTC) and key skills required.

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/how-do-i-become-a-lawyer->

Inside the UK Supreme Court: Its Role, Its Work, and Cases that Affect Us All - FutureLearn

Developed in partnership with Royal Holloway and the UK Supreme Court, this course provides a very short introduction to the Court's functions, structure, judicial roles and landmark cases.

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/inside-the-supreme-court>

Introducing Research in Law and Beyond - OpenLearn

From the Open University, this course covers the essentials of conducting research in law. Including how to develop research ideas, formulate questions, plan and carry out literature reviews and methodologies, analyse findings and structure a proposal.

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/society-politics-law/introducing-research-law-and-beyond/>

Introduction to English Common Law - Coursera

Created by the University of London, this course explores the history, constitutional principles, sources of law, court structures, case law and the influence of European Union and human rights law on the English legal system

<https://www.coursera.org/learn/intro-common-law>

Introduction to the Rule of Law - FutureLearn

This course from the University of Law, looks at what is meant by the 'Rule of Law', *'focussing on the role of the Judiciary and the interconnection between the Rule of Law and our human rights.'*

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/introduction-to-the-rule-of-law>

Introduction to Studying Law - FutureLearn

From the University of Law, this course introduces foundational legal concepts, critical reading, argument writing and research methodologies to prepare learners for undergraduate law studies

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/international-foundation-programme-in-law-the-first-step-towards-your-future-successful-career>

Introduction to UK Immigration Law - OpenLearn

Developed by The Open University and HJT Training, this course introduces learners to the UK immigration legal framework, including legislation, human rights obligations, tribunal structures and the role of immigration advisers.

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/society-politics-law/introduction-uk-immigration-law-and-becoming-immigration-advisor>

Judicial Decision Making - OpenLearn

From the Open University , this course provides an introduction to how judges decide cases in England and Wales. Covering fact-finding, decision-making, reason-giving, judicial bias and the role of precedent.

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/society-politics-law/law/judicial-decision-making/>

The Law-Making Process in England and Wales - OpenLearn

From the Open University, this course explains how legislation is developed and covers the distinction between primary and secondary legislation.

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/society-politics-law/the-law-making-process-england-and-wales/>

Myths in Law - OpenLearn

This course from the Open University explores popular misconceptions about the criminal justice system and uses case studies and evidence to reveal when such beliefs are true, false, or a mixture of both

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/society-politics-law/myths-law/>

Starting with Law - OpenLearn

This course is designed to explain the role of law in society, the concept of legal rights and responsibilities and basic learning skills such as efficient reading and summarising legal texts

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/society-politics-law/starting-law/>

20. A-Z of Organisations

Organisations that may be able to provide help and advice; or that provide useful information and guidance on their websites. In the case of not-for-profit, or charitable, organisations, the help they are able to offer may be limited dependent on the demand for their services. This list is by no means comprehensive.

Acas (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service)

'Acas gives employees and employers free, impartial advice on workplace rights, rules and best practice.'

<https://www.acas.org.uk/>

Access Social Care

Provides free legal advice and support to people with social care needs, helping them secure the care they are entitled to through community partnerships, online resources and legal advocacy networks.

<https://www.accesscharity.org.uk/>

Action Against Medical Accidents (AvMA)

AvMA is the UK charity dedicated to patient safety and justice, offering free, independent advice and support via a helpline, written casework and inquest assistance to individuals harmed by avoidable medical incidents.

<https://www.avma.org.uk/>

Advicelocal

Signposting independent advice organisations across the UK.

<https://advicelocal.uk>

Advicenow

Providing support, including information, legal self-help tools and training.

<https://www.advicenow.org.uk/>

Advocacy After Fatal Domestic Abuse (AAFDA)

Providing specialist advocacy and peer support to people bereaved through domestic abuse, suicide, or homicide. Offering emotional support, representation and guidance throughout formal investigations and legal proceedings.

<https://aafda.org.uk/>

The Advocacy Project

The Advocacy Project is a London-based charity providing free, independent advocacy services in health, social care and mental capacity matters. They support people to understand their rights, speak up in care decisions and make informed choices.

<https://www.advocacyproject.org.uk/>

Advocate

'Advocate is a charity that finds free legal assistance from volunteer barristers'.

<https://weareadvocate.org.uk/>

Age UK

Specialist advice on care, money, health and housing.

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/>

The AIRE Centre (Advice on Individual Rights in Europe)

A UK-based charity that uses European and international human rights law to support vulnerable individuals across the UK and Europe by offering free legal advice and strategic litigation.

<https://www.airecentre.org/>

Alzheimer's Society

Guidance on legal and financial matters for people with dementia and their carers, including advice on powers of attorney, benefits, care costs and the Court of Protection

<https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/legal-financial>

Anti Trafficking and Labour Exploitation Unit (ATLEU)

'ATLEU is the only UK charity that provides dedicated, holistic legal support to survivors of trafficking and slavery.'

<https://www.atleu.org.uk/>

APPEAL

A UK-based non-profit law practice that helps individuals challenge wrongful criminal convictions.

<https://appeal.org.uk/get-help/>

Asylum Aid

Provides free legal advice and representation to asylum seekers and refugees, including those seeking help with immigration applications, detention reviews and protection claims.

<https://www.asylumaid.org.uk/>

Asylum Support Appeals Project (ASAP)

ASAP is a UK charity focused on preventing destitution among asylum seekers by providing free legal representation in appeals against Home Office refusals or withdrawals of housing and financial support from the Asylum Support Tribunal.

<https://www.asaproject.org/>

Bail for Immigration Detainees (BiD)

An independent charity providing *'legal advice, information and representation alongside research, policy advocacy and strategic litigation.'*

<https://www.biduk.org/>

The Brain Charity

Supporting anyone in the UK with a neurological condition, the Brain Charity can offer specialist legal advice.

<https://www.thebraincharity.org.uk/>

British Red Cross

Offering support to asylum seekers, refugees and vulnerable migrants in the UK, including emergency assistance, one-on-one casework, family reunion help and advice on legal and welfare issues.

<https://www.redcross.org.uk/get-help/get-help-as-a-refugee>

Cafcass

Representing *'the interests of children and young people in the family court'*

<https://www.cafcass.gov.uk/>

Carers UK

Provides practical help and support for anyone in a caring role.

<https://www.carersuk.org/>

Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution (CEDR)

Specialising in mediation and alternative dispute resolution (ADR). CEDR provides independent commercial and consumer dispute resolution services.

<https://www.cedr.com/>

Centre for Military Justice

Provides free, independent legal advice, advocacy and casework to serving or former members of the Armed Forces and their bereaved families.

<https://centreformilitaryjustice.org.uk/>

Centre for Women's Justice

Produces a number of guides signposting specialist legal advice.

<https://www.centreforwomensjustice.org.uk/>

Centrepont

Charity that provides accommodation, support services and legal and financial advice to young people aged 16–25 facing or experiencing homelessness.

<https://centrepont.org.uk/>

Chancery Bar Mediation Scheme

Advocate and the Chancery Bar Association's free mediation scheme for suitable Chancery and commercial cases where at least one party cannot afford a mediator.

<https://weareadvocate.org.uk/volunteer/partner-schemes.html>

Citizens Advice

'Network of independent charities offers confidential advice online, over the phone, and in person, for free.'

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>

The Compassionate Friends (TCF)

Charity providing *'peer support to bereaved parents, adult siblings and grandparents who have experienced the death of a child, sibling or grandchild.'* The legal help section includes guidance and factsheets on the inquest process, making complaints to or about the NHS and child death reviews.

<https://www.tcf.org.uk/>

Contact

Supporting families with disabled children. Offering advice on issues such as education, benefits and social care.

<https://contact.org.uk/>

Coram Child Law Advice

Offering free information and advice on family and education law in England. It supports parents, carers, professionals and young people with guidance tailored to complex issues like care proceedings, special educational needs and parental responsibility

<https://childlawadvice.org.uk/>

Dad's House

Provides practical, emotional and legal support to single fathers and their families. Services include pro bono family law clinics and peer support groups.

<https://www.dadshouse.org.uk/>

Debt Advice Foundation

A registered UK charity, providing free legal debt advice and support to anyone struggling with loans, credit, or debt.

<https://www.debtadvicefoundation.org/>

Detention Action

A human rights charity dedicated to defending the rights and improving the welfare of individuals held in immigration detention across the UK. They can provide direct support via casework services in Immigration Removal Centres and prisons.

<https://detentionaction.org.uk/>

Disability Justice Project

Supports Deaf and Disabled People's Organisations (DDPOs) in London to advance rights to independent living and equitable access to goods and services.

<https://www.disabilityjustice.org.uk/>

Disability Law Service

Provides 'free legal advice on community care, employment, housing, discrimination, public law and welfare benefits to Disabled people and their carers to ensure that they have access to their rights and justice.'

<https://dls.org.uk/>

Disability Rights UK

Provides a comprehensive collection of free guides, benefit calculators and helplines covering issues including welfare benefits, social care and education support. Designed by and for disabled people to help individuals, carers, advisers and organisations access accurate legal and practical information

<https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/>

Domestic Violence Assist

'The UK's only registered charity specialising exclusively in arranging Non-Molestation Orders, Prohibited Steps Orders & Occupation Orders.'

<https://www.dvassist.org.uk/>

Equality Advisory and Support Service (EASS)

EASS is a government-backed helpline offering free, confidential advice and assistance on discrimination and human rights issues. It supports individuals in understanding their rights, facilitates informal resolution, helps explore legal aid eligibility, but does not provide legal representation or advice during court proceedings

<https://www.equalityadvisoryservice.com/>

Environmental Law Foundation (ELF)

ELF is a UK charity that helps individuals and communities access environmental justice by providing free legal advice through its helpline, university-based legal clinics and a network of pro bono lawyers and technical experts

<https://elflaw.org/>

Family Rights Group

Provides free, independent advice and advocacy to parents, kinship carers and relatives involved with children's social care or court proceedings.

<https://frg.org.uk/>

FLAWS (Finding Legal Options for Women Survivors)

FLAWS is a national legal support project for survivors of domestic abuse, run by RCJ Advice in partnership with Rights of Women. It offers confidential advice via phone or email, helps users apply for protective orders through the [CourtNav](#) tool and connects individuals with legal aid solicitors or pro bono assistance.

<https://www.flows.org.uk/>

Friends, Families & Travellers

A charity supporting Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities by providing advice, promoting rights and challenging discrimination.

<https://www.gypsy-traveller.org/>

Free Representation Unit (FRU)

Provides free legal representation for eligible individuals in employment tribunals, benefit appeals and criminal injury compensation cases, but only for hearings taking place in London or the South East, and generally only if the case has been referred through an accredited advice agency.

<https://www.thefru.org.uk/can-fru-help-you>

Galop

LGBT+ anti-abuse charity, providing dedicated helplines, advocacy and casework to support LGBT+ victims of domestic abuse, hate crime, sexual violence, conversion therapy and honour-based abuse.

<https://www.galop.org.uk/>

Gingerbread

Supporting single-parent families, offering expert advice via helplines and online resources.

<https://www.gingerbread.org.uk/>

Hourglass

Charity dedicated to ending abuse and exploitation of older people. Offering a free 24/7 helpline.

<https://www.wearehourglass.org/>

Housing Loss Prevention Advice Service (HLPAS)

HLPAS is a government-funded, means-free scheme that offers both early legal advice on housing, debt and welfare benefit issues for those at risk of losing their home and in-court duty representation during possession hearings regardless of financial circumstances.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-loss-prevention-advice-service-hlpas>

Howard League for Penal Reform

'The only frontline national legal team specialising in the legal rights and entitlements of children and young people in custody.'

<https://howardleague.org/legal-work/advice-line/>

Independent Age

Provides a free, confidential and impartial telephone and web-chat service offering expert support to older people, their families, friends, carers, and health professionals.

<https://www.independentage.org/get-support/call-helpline>

INQUEST

'INQUEST is the UK's only charity fighting alongside bereaved families following deaths in state custody and care.'

<https://www.inquest.org.uk/>

IPSEA (Independent Provider of Special Education Advice)

IPSEA is England's leading charity on SEND law, providing families with free, independent legal guidance, casework support, tribunal assistance and training.

<https://www.ipsea.org.uk/>

Islamophobia Response Unit (IRU)

IRU is an independent UK charity supporting victims of Islamophobic hate crimes, incidents and discrimination. They offer free legal guidance, basic emotional support, incident reporting, data monitoring and referrals to other services.

<https://www.theiru.org.uk>

Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI)

JCWI is an independent UK charity campaigning for fairness in immigration, nationality and asylum law. It provides expert legal advice and representation, free helplines for people without immigration status and accessible toolkits.

<https://jcwi.org.uk/>

Just for Kids Law

Provides legal advice, youth advocacy and representation to children and young people.

<https://www.justforkidslaw.org/>

Kinship

Supporting family members and close friends who step in to care for children when their parents are unable to do so.

Provides expert legal, practical, emotional and peer support.

<https://kinship.org.uk/>

Justice for Tenants

Offering free advice, support and representation to renters, particularly on issues such as rent repayment orders, deposit disputes, evictions and housing disrepair.

<https://www.justicefortenants.org/>

Kalayaan: Justice for Migrant Domestic Workers

Kalayaan is a UK charity dedicated to supporting migrant domestic workers. They provide tailored immigration and employment rights advice, emergency accommodation and assistance to survivors of trafficking.

<https://www.kalayaan.org.uk/>

Kanlungan

The Kanlungan Filipino Consortium is a UK-registered charity composed of several Filipino and Southeast/East Asian grassroots organisations that work collaboratively to support migrants and the diaspora community. They provide culturally sensitive advice and advocacy on mental health, welfare, employment and immigration issues.

<https://www.kanlungan.org.uk/>

KIND in the UK (Kids in Need of Defense UK)

KIND UK is a collaboration of five UK legal charities working with the US-based KIND Inc. to provide pro bono legal advice and representation to undocumented and migrant children in the UK who are ineligible for legal aid.

<https://www.kidsinneedofdefense.org.uk/>

Law Centres Network

The Law Centres Network is the national membership body for Law Centres across England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, supporting free legal advice, casework and representation in areas like housing, immigration, welfare benefits and employment for those who cannot afford legal help.

<https://www.lawcentres.org.uk/>

LawWorks

LawWorks is a UK charity that connects people and community groups in need of legal support with volunteer legal professionals who provide free advice, pro bono casework and legal clinics.

<https://www.lawworks.org.uk>

Legal Choices

Plain-English information to help people understand legal issues, choose trusted advisers and navigate legal services.

<https://www.legalchoices.org.uk/>

Leasehold Advisory Service

Government-funded, independent advice body for residential leaseholders and park home owners. Providing legally qualified guidance, though it cannot undertake casework or provide formal representation.

<https://www.lease-advice.org/>

Liberty

Liberty can not give legal advice to individuals, but they signpost organisations that do and they have many helpful guides.

<https://www.libertyhumanrights.org.uk/>

Macmillan

'[T]rained advisors, including cancer information specialist nurses can provide emotional support and practical information about all aspects of cancer.' Including advice on money and employment matters.

<https://www.macmillan.org.uk>

ManKind

Provides a confidential helpline offering emotional support, practical information and signposting to solicitors and legal services.

<https://mankind.org.uk/help-for-victims/legal-support/>

Maternity Action

Providing free, confidential advice to pregnant women and new parents on topics such as employment rights, maternity pay and benefits, leave entitlements and flexible working requests.

<https://maternityaction.org.uk/>

Mencap

Offering advice, information and support to people with a learning disability and their families or carers, covering topics such as social care, housing, benefits, health and wellbeing, education, employment, safeguarding and mental capacity.

<https://www.mencap.org.uk/advice-and-support/learning-disability-helpline>

Mesothelioma UK

Has a legal panel of specialist solicitors who offer free, expert, no-win-no-fee legal advice and support to people diagnosed with mesothelioma (and their families), helping them access compensation and navigate time limits for claims.

<https://www.mesothelioma.uk.com/legal-advice/>

Migrant Help

Core services include asylum support and specialist help for victims of slavery and human trafficking.

<https://www.migranthelpuk.org/>

Mind

Mind have a range of useful guides on different aspects of mental health-related legal rights.

<https://www.mind.org.uk/>

Money Helper

Advice on how to access free, impartial money and debt guidance, including help with budgeting, benefits, savings, pensions, scams and financial disputes

<https://www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en/getting-help-and-advice>

MS Society

Offering a free, confidential legal advice service to help people affected by MS, with issues such as employment, disability discrimination, and community care law.

<https://www.mssociety.org.uk/living-with-ms/financial-help/legal-advice>

National Centre for Domestic Violence

Helping survivors of domestic violence and abuse obtain protection against an abuser, as well as offering services to the police, probation service, domestic abuse agency workers, the legal profession and judiciary.

<https://www.ncdv.org.uk/>

National Family Mediation

'Largest provider of family mediation in England and Wales'

<https://www.nfm.org.uk/>

National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS)

NYAS is a children's rights charity providing free advocacy, legal advice, representation and support services to care-experienced children, young people, and vulnerable adults. They operate a national helpline and represent individuals in private family law under the Family Proceedings Act.

<https://www.nyas.net/>

Not Beyond Redemption

Provides free family law advice and court representation to incarcerated mothers, helping them re-establish or maintain relationships with their children through pro bono legal clinics and court support.

<https://notbeyondredemption.co.uk/>

NSPCC

Provides expert advice and practical support for parents and carers on a wide range of child safety issues.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/>

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS is a confidential hospital-based support service offering advice, information and help to patients, their families and carers navigating NHS care.

<https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/hospitals/what-is-pals-patient-advice-and-liaison-service/>

The Patients Association

Offers free guidance on medical negligence and lists accredited law firms that provide initial consultations with no financial risk.

<https://www.patients-association.org.uk/legal-advice>

POhWER

Provides free, independent advocacy, advice and information services to people experiencing disability, vulnerability, social exclusion, or distress. Their services include Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy (IMCA), Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA), Care Act Advocacy, and NHS Complaints Advocacy

<https://www.pohwer.net/>

Praxis

Providing advice and support for migrants and refugees.

<https://www.praxis.org.uk/>

Pregnant the Screwed

Charity dedicated to ending the 'motherhood penalty' by supporting mothers facing pregnancy and maternity discrimination. Providing advice guides, legal advice by referral and peer support for those going through an employment tribunal.

<https://pregnantthenscrewed.com/>

Prisoners' Advice Service (PAS)

Offers 'free legal advice and support to adult prisoners throughout England and Wales regarding their legal, human and healthcare rights, conditions of imprisonment and the application of Prison Law and the Prison Rules.'

<https://www.prisonersadvice.org.uk/>

Protect

Leading whistleblowing charity, offering a free and confidential legal advice line to individuals raising concerns at work.

<https://protect-advice.org.uk/>

Public Law Project (PLP)

'PLP employs specialist lawyers who assist individuals experiencing personal disadvantage, or charities or organisations representing the interests of marginalised or disadvantaged groups.'

<https://publiclawproject.org.uk/>

Rachel's Voice

Rachel's Voice is a charity that can provide legal advice to families who have suffered a bereavement after the avoidable death of a person with a learning disability in a healthcare setting.

<https://www.rachelsvoice.org.uk/>

Rainbow Migration

Offers free and confidential legal, social and emotional support to LGBTQI+ people going through the asylum or immigration process.

<https://www.rainbowmigration.org.uk/>

Rape Crisis

Operates a national 24/7 support line and network of 37 local centres offering free, specialist services, including counselling and Independent Sexual Violence Advocates (ISVAs) for anyone aged 16+ affected by any form of sexual violence or abuse.

<https://rapecrisis.org.uk/>

RCJ Advice

Law Centre offering free civil, family, housing, immigration and domestic abuse legal advice. Originally based in the Royal Courts of Justice, it now delivers services nationally.

<https://www.rcjadvise.org.uk/>

Refuge

Specialist domestic abuse charity, offering survivors life-saving services such as emergency accommodation, community outreach, individual advocacy and a 24/7 national helpline.

<https://refuge.org.uk/>

Refugee Legal Support

Charity working with displaced individuals, providing free legal advice, immigration assistance and multilingual resources for asylum seekers and migrants navigating family reunion and other immigration processes.

<https://refugeelegalsupport.org/>

Release

Offers free, confidential advice on drug use and drug laws. Staffed by legal and drug experts, the helpline provides tailored support on legal consequences, health and harm reduction issues and related social welfare problems.

<https://www.release.org.uk/>

Resolution

Free resources and expert information on alternatives to court, connecting users with family law professionals.

<https://resolution.org.uk/>

Rethink

'The Rethink Mental Illness Advice Service provides a trusted resource for information on mental illness, mental health laws, and guidance for carers.'

<https://www.rethink.org/>

RICS Dispute Resolution Service

Provides confidential alternatives to court for resolving property and construction disputes, including mediation, arbitration, and adjudication.

<https://www.rics.org/dispute-resolution-service>

Rights of Women

Charity 'dedicated to providing frontline legal advice to women experiencing all forms of violence against women and girls in England and Wales.'

<https://www.rightsofwomen.org.uk/>

Right to Remain

Migrant-led charity dedicated to supporting asylum seekers, refugees and migrants in securing their right to stay in the UK. They provide free, accessible information, legal resources and training through tools such as their online [Toolkit](#).

<https://righttoremain.org.uk/>

Rightsnet

Rightsnet is an online hub for welfare rights advisers, offering legal updates, peer support, tools and training. Includes a 'resources' section which signposts useful organisations.

<https://www.rightsnet.org.uk/resources>

Royal British Legion

Services are available to serving personnel, veterans and their families. Offers free advice, support and tribunal representation for those wanting to appeal their War Pension, Armed Forces Compensation award, or any DWP benefit awards.

<https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/>

SCARD (Support & Care After Road Death & Injury)

SCARD provides free emotional and practical support to people affected by road traffic accidents.

<https://www.scard.org.uk/index.html>

Scope

Scope offers accessible legal information and guidance tailored for disabled individuals, covering issues like discrimination, reasonable adjustments, benefits appeals, mental capacity and advocacy.

<https://www.scope.org.uk/>

Settled

Assists vulnerable EU, EEA, Swiss, and Ukrainian citizens navigating immigration issues with free, accredited advice on the EU Settlement Scheme.

<https://settled.org.uk/>

Shelter

Shelter's solicitors can *'provide free legal advice and attend court to help people who've lost their homes or are facing eviction.'*

<https://england.shelter.org.uk/>

Southall Black Sisters

Southall Black Sisters *'conducts specialist domestic abuse casework, delivered by and for Black and minoritised women.'* Covering the boroughs of Ealing, Hounslow and Hillingdon.

<https://southallblacksisters.org.uk/>

SSFA (Soldiers' and Sailors' Families Association)

SSAFA's Veterans in the Criminal Justice System (VCJS) service provides non-judgmental, practical and emotional support to veterans whether in custody, on probation, or in the community and to their families.

<https://www.ssafa.org.uk/get-help/veterans-in-the-criminal-justice-system/>

StepChange

Free debt advice service, offering confidential guidance and tailored financial solutions.

<https://www.stepchange.org/>

Support Through Court

Support Through Court *'provide a safe space for people facing court alone. [Their] volunteers will listen to your story, help you to problem-solve and decide next steps'.*

<https://www.supportthroughcourt.org/>

Surviving Economic Abuse

Providing a Financial Support Line for Victims of Domestic Abuse, offering *'specialist advice to anyone experiencing domestic abuse who is in financial difficulty.'*

<https://survivingeconomicabuse.org/>

Suzy Lamplugh Trust

The National Stalking Helpline offers free advice and practical support to stalking victims, including legal guidance and advocacy with police or courts.

<https://www.suzylamplugh.org/how-can-the-helpline-help>

Trans Legal Clinic

Free advice and casework for transgender and non-binary individuals. Areas of focus include gender recognition, healthcare advocacy, housing and homelessness, gender-based violence, discrimination and public law challenges.

<https://www.translegalclinic.com/>

Transparency Project

Dedicated to explaining and demystifying family law and courts in England and Wales, providing clear information and signposting to helpful resources. They do not offer direct legal services.

<https://transparencyproject.org.uk/resources/>

Turn2us

A national charity that helps people experiencing financial hardship access welfare benefits and find charitable grants.

<https://www.turn2us.org.uk/>

Veterinary Client Mediation Service (VCMS)

Independent ADR scheme funded by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, offering impartial mediation to resolve complaints between pet owners and veterinary practices across the UK.

<https://www.vetmediation.co.uk/>

Victim Support

Offers free, confidential help to anyone affected by crime, providing emotional support, practical advice and guidance navigating the justice system.

<https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/>

Which? Legal Advice

A paid subscription legal advice service run by Which?, offering access via phone and email to experienced legal advisers.

<https://legalservice.which.co.uk/>

Windrush Justice Clinic

Provides free, independent legal support to victims of the Windrush scandal, helping them apply for compensation under the Windrush Compensation Scheme.

<https://www.windrushjc.org/>

Women in Prison

Offering a variety of support resources for women affected by the criminal justice system, including topic guides on work rights in prison, temporary release and legal processes.

<https://womeninprison.org.uk/>

Work Rights Centre

Offering free, confidential legal assistance to migrants and socioeconomically disadvantaged individuals on employment, immigration and welfare issues across London and Manchester.

<https://www.workrightscentre.org/>

Working Families

National charity for working parents and carers, offering free legal advice on employment rights.

<https://workingfamilies.org.uk/>

Youth Justice Legal Centre

Offering legally accurate information, expert guidance, training and resources to lawyers, professionals, young people and their families to help support children's rights and improve legal outcomes in the criminal justice system.

<https://yjlc.uk>

Z2k

London-based anti-poverty charity providing free frontline advice, casework and representation in Disability Benefits Tribunals to low-income, disabled and at-risk individuals.

<https://z2k.org>

Zero Hours Justice

Offering information and support to individuals on zero-hours contracts who feel they have been treated unfairly. While they can not provide legal representation or advice, they can explain your rights and help clarify issues.

<https://www.zerohoursjustice.org/>

21. Organisations by Subject

Alternative Dispute Resolution

Chancery Bar Mediation Scheme

Advocate and the Chancery Bar Association's free mediation scheme for suitable Chancery and commercial cases where at least one party cannot afford a mediator.

<https://weareadvocate.org.uk/volunteer/partner-schemes.html>

Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution (CEDR)

Specialising in mediation and alternative dispute resolution (ADR). CEDR provides independent commercial and consumer dispute resolution services.

<https://www.cedr.com/>

Resolution

Free resources and expert information on alternatives to court and connecting users with family law professionals.

<https://resolution.org.uk/>

RICS Dispute Resolution Service

Provides confidential alternatives to court for resolving property and construction disputes, including mediation, arbitration, and adjudication.

<https://www.rics.org/dispute-resolution-service>

Armed Forces

Centre for Military Justice

Provides free, independent legal advice, advocacy and casework to serving or former members of the Armed Forces and their bereaved families.

<https://centreformilitaryjustice.org.uk/>

SSFA (Soldiers' and Sailors' Families Association)

SSFA's Veterans in the Criminal Justice System (VCJS) service provides non-judgmental, practical and emotional support to veterans whether in custody, on probation, or in the community and to their families.

<https://www.ssafa.org.uk/get-help/veterans-in-the-criminal-justice-system/>

Royal British Legion

Services are available to serving personnel, veterans and their families. Offers free advice, support and tribunal representation for those wanting to appeal their War Pension, Armed Forces Compensation award, or any DWP benefit awards.

<https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/>

Crime & Criminal Justice

See also [Domestic Abuse](#)

Anti Trafficking and Labour Exploitation Unit (ATLEU)

'ATLEU is the only UK charity that provides dedicated, holistic legal support to survivors of trafficking and slavery.'

<https://www.atleu.org.uk/>

APPEAL

A UK-based non-profit law practice that helps individuals challenge wrongful criminal convictions.

<https://appeal.org.uk/get-help/>

Islamophobia Response Unit (IRU)

IRU is an independent UK charity supporting victims of Islamophobic hate crimes, incidents and discrimination. They offer free legal guidance, basic emotional support, incident reporting, data monitoring and referrals to other services.

<https://www.theiru.org.uk>

Rape Crisis

Operates a national 24/7 support line and network of 37 local centres offering free, specialist services, including counselling and Independent Sexual Violence Advocates (ISVAs) for anyone aged 16+ affected by any form of sexual violence or abuse.

<https://rapecrisis.org.uk/>

Suzy Lamplugh Trust

The National Stalking Helpline offers free advice and practical support to stalking victims, including legal guidance and advocacy with police or courts.

<https://www.suzylamplugh.org/how-can-the-helpline-help>

Victim Support

Offers free, confidential help to anyone affected by crime, providing emotional support, practical advice and guidance navigating the justice system.

<https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/>

Youth Justice Legal Centre

Offering legally accurate information, expert guidance, training and resources to lawyers, professionals, young people and their families to help support children's rights and improve legal outcomes in the criminal justice system.

<https://yjlc.uk>

Death

The Compassionate Friends (TCF)

Charity providing 'peer support to bereaved parents, adult siblings and grandparents who have experienced the death of a child, sibling or grandchild.' The legal help section includes guidance and factsheets on the inquest process, making complaints to or about the NHS and child death reviews.

<https://www.tcf.org.uk/>

INQUEST

'INQUEST is the UK's only charity fighting alongside bereaved families following deaths in state custody and care.'

<https://www.inquest.org.uk/>

Rachel's Voice

Rachel's Voice is a charity that can provide legal advice to families who have suffered a bereavement after the avoidable death of a person with a learning disability in a healthcare setting.

<https://www.rachelsvoice.org.uk/>

SCARD (Support & Care After Road Death & Injury)

SCARD provides free emotional and practical support to people affected by road traffic accidents.

<https://www.scard.org.uk/index.html>

Disability

Contact

Supporting families with disabled children. Offering advice on issues such as education, benefits and social care.

<https://contact.org.uk/>

Disability Justice Project

Supports Deaf and Disabled People's Organisations (DDPOs) in London to advance rights to independent living and equitable access to goods and services.

<https://www.disabilityjustice.org.uk/>

Disability Law Service

Provides 'free legal advice on community care, employment, housing, discrimination, public law and welfare benefits to Disabled people and their carers to ensure that they have access to their rights and justice.'

<https://dls.org.uk/>

Disability Rights UK

Provides a comprehensive collection of free guides, benefit calculators and helplines covering issues including welfare benefits, social care and education support. Designed by and for disabled people to help individuals, carers, advisers and organisations access accurate legal and practical information

<https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/>

IPSEA (Independent Provider of Special Education Advice)

IPSEA is England's leading charity on SEND law, providing families with free, independent legal guidance, casework support, tribunal assistance and training.

<https://www.ipsea.org.uk/>

Mencap

Offering advice, information and support to people with a learning disability and their families or carers, covering topics such as social care, housing, benefits, health and wellbeing, education, employment, safeguarding and mental capacity.

<https://www.mencap.org.uk/advice-and-support/learning-disability-helpline>

MS Society

Offering a free, confidential legal advice service to help people affected by MS with issues like employment, disability discrimination, and community care law.

<https://www.mssociety.org.uk/living-with-ms/financial-help/legal-advice>

Scope

Scope offers accessible legal information and guidance tailored for disabled individuals, covering issues like discrimination, reasonable adjustments, benefits appeals, mental capacity and advocacy.

<https://www.scope.org.uk/>

PohWER

Provides free, independent advocacy, advice and information services to people experiencing disability, vulnerability, social exclusion, or distress. Their services include Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy (IMCA), Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA), Care Act Advocacy, and NHS Complaints Advocacy

<https://www.pohwer.net/>

Z2k

London-based anti-poverty charity providing free frontline advice, casework and representation in Disability Benefits Tribunals to low-income, disabled and at-risk individuals.

<https://z2k.org>

Discrimination

Islamophobia Response Unit (IRU)

IRU is an independent UK charity supporting victims of Islamophobic hate crimes, incidents and discrimination. They offer free legal guidance, basic emotional support, incident reporting, data monitoring and referrals to other services.

<https://www.theiru.org.uk>

Friends, Families & Travellers

A charity supporting Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities by providing advice, promoting rights and challenging discrimination.

<https://www.gypsy-traveller.org/>

Domestic Abuse

Advocacy After Fatal Domestic Abuse (AAFDA)

AAFDA is a UK charity providing specialist advocacy and peer support to people bereaved through domestic abuse, suicide, or homicide. They help families navigate processes like Domestic Homicide Reviews, inquests, and mental health inquiries, offering emotional support, representation and guidance throughout formal investigations and legal proceedings.

<https://aafda.org.uk/>

Domestic Violence Assist

'The UK's only registered charity specialising exclusively in arranging Non-Molestation Orders, Prohibited Steps Orders & Occupation Orders.'

<https://www.dvassist.org.uk/>

FLOWS (Finding Legal Options for Women Survivors)

FLOWS is a national legal support project for survivors of domestic abuse, run by RCJ Advice in partnership with Rights of Women. It offers confidential advice via phone or email, helps users apply for protective orders through the [CourtNav](#) tool and connects individuals with legal aid solicitors or pro bono assistance.

<https://www.flows.org.uk/>

ManKind

Provides a confidential helpline offering emotional support, practical information and signposting to solicitors and legal services.

<https://mankind.org.uk/help-for-victims/legal-support/>

National Centre for Domestic Violence

Helping survivors of domestic violence and abuse obtain protection against an abuser, as well as offering services to the police, probation service, domestic abuse agency workers, the legal profession and judiciary.

<https://www.ncdv.org.uk/>

Refuge

Specialist domestic abuse charity, offering survivors life-saving services such as emergency accommodation, community outreach, individual advocacy and a 24/7 national helpline.

<https://refuge.org.uk/>

Southall Black Sisters

Southall Black Sisters '*conducts specialist domestic abuse casework, delivered by and for Black and minoritised women.*' Covering the boroughs of Ealing, Hounslow and Hillingdon.

<https://southallblacksisters.org.uk/>

Surviving Economic Abuse

Providing a Financial Support Line for Victims of Domestic Abuse, offering '*specialist advice to anyone experiencing domestic abuse who is in financial difficulty.*'

<https://survivingeconomicabuse.org/>

Elderly

Age UK

Specialist advice on care, money, health and housing.

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/>

Alzheimer's Society

Guidance on legal and financial matters for people with dementia and their carers, including advice on powers of attorney, benefits, care costs and the Court of Protection

<https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/legal-financial>

Hourglass

Charity dedicated to ending abuse and exploitation of older people. Offering a free 24/7 helpline.

<https://www.wearehourglass.org/>

Independent Age

Provides a free, confidential and impartial telephone and web-chat service offering expert support to older people, their families, friends, carers, and health professionals.

<https://www.independentage.org/get-support/call-helpline>

Employment

Acas (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service)

'Acas gives employees and employers free, impartial advice on workplace rights, rules and best practice.'

<https://www.acas.org.uk/>

Kalayaan: Justice for Migrant Domestic Workers

Kalayaan is a UK charity dedicated to supporting migrant domestic workers. They provide tailored immigration and employment rights advice, emergency accommodation and assistance to survivors of trafficking.

<https://www.kalayaan.org.uk/>

Maternity Action

Providing free, confidential advice to pregnant women and new parents on topics such as employment rights, maternity pay and benefits, leave entitlements, and flexible working requests.

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Pregnant the Screwed

Charity dedicated to ending the 'motherhood penalty' by supporting mothers facing pregnancy and maternity discrimination. Providing advice guides, legal advice by referral and peer support for those going through an employment tribunal.

<https://pregnantthenscrewed.com/>

Protect

Leading whistleblowing charity, offering a free and confidential legal advice line to individuals raising concerns at work.

<https://protect-advice.org.uk/>

Work Rights Centre

Offering free, confidential legal assistance to migrants and socioeconomically disadvantaged individuals on employment, immigration and welfare issues across London and Manchester.

<https://www.workrightscentre.org/>

Working Families

National charity for working parents and carers, offering free legal advice on employment rights.

<https://workingfamilies.org.uk/>

Zero Hours Justice

Offering information and support to individuals on zero-hours contracts who feel they have been treated unfairly. While they can not provide legal representation or advice, they can explain your rights and help clarify issues.

<https://www.zerohoursjustice.org/>

Environment

Environmental Law Foundation (ELF)

ELF is a UK charity that helps individuals and communities access environmental justice by providing free legal advice through its helpline, university-based legal clinics and a network of pro bono lawyers and technical experts

<https://elflaw.org/>

Family & Children

Cafcass

Representing *'the interests of children and young people in the family court'*

<https://www.cafcass.gov.uk/>

Carers UK

Provides practical help and support for anyone in a caring role.

<https://www.carersuk.org/>

Contact

Supporting families with disabled children. Offering advice on issues such as education, benefits and social care.

<https://contact.org.uk/>

Coram Child Law Advice

Offering free information and advice on family and education law in England. It supports parents, carers, professionals and young people with guidance tailored to complex issues like care proceedings, special educational needs and parental responsibility

<https://childlawadvice.org.uk/>

Dad's House

Provides practical, emotional and legal support to single fathers and their families. Services include pro bono family law clinics and peer support groups.

<https://www.dadshouse.org.uk/>

Family Rights Group

Provides free, independent advice and advocacy to parents, kinship carers and relatives involved with children's social care or court proceedings.

<https://frg.org.uk/>

Gingerbread

Supporting single-parent families, offering expert advice via helplines and online resources.

<https://www.gingerbread.org.uk/>

Just for Kids Law

Provides legal advice, youth advocacy and representation to children and young people.

<https://www.justforkidslaw.org/>

Kinship

Supporting family members and close friends who step in to care for children when their parents are unable to do so.

Provides expert legal, practical, emotional and peer support.

<https://kinship.org.uk/>

KIND in the UK (Kids in Need of Defense UK)

KIND UK is a collaboration of five UK legal charities working with the US-based KIND Inc. to provide pro bono legal advice and representation to undocumented and migrant children in the UK who are ineligible for legal aid.

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National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS)

NYAS is a children's rights charity providing free advocacy, legal advice, representation and support services to care-experienced children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

They operate a national helpline and represent individuals in private family law under the Family Proceedings Act.

<https://www.nyas.net/>

NSPCC

Provides expert advice and practical support for parents and carers on a wide range of child safety issues.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/>

Pregnant the Screwed

Charity dedicated to ending the 'motherhood penalty' by supporting mothers facing pregnancy and maternity discrimination. Providing advice guides, legal advice by referral and peer support for those going through an employment tribunal.

<https://pregnantthenscrewed.com/>

Resolution

Free resources and expert information on alternatives to court and connecting users with family law professionals.

<https://resolution.org.uk/>

Transparency Project

Dedicated to explaining and demystifying family law and courts in England and Wales, providing clear information and signposting to helpful resources. They do not offer direct legal services.

<https://transparencyproject.org.uk/resources/>

Working Families

National charity for working parents and carers, offering free legal advice on employment rights.

<https://workingfamilies.org.uk/>

Youth Justice Legal Centre

Offering legally accurate information, expert guidance, training and resources to lawyers, professionals, young people and their families to help support children's rights and improve legal outcomes in the criminal justice system.

<https://yjlc.uk>

General

Advicelocal

Signposting independent advice organisations across the UK.

<https://advicelocal.uk>

Advicenow

Providing legal support, including information, legal self-help tools and training.

<https://www.advicenow.org.uk/>

Advocate

'Advocate is a charity that finds free legal assistance from volunteer barristers'.

<https://weareadvocate.org.uk/>

Citizens Advice

'Network of independent charities offers confidential advice online, over the phone, and in person, for free.'

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>

Free Representation Unit (FRU)

Provides free legal representation for eligible individuals in employment tribunals, benefit appeals and criminal injury compensation cases, but only for hearings taking place in London or the South East, and generally only if the case has been referred through an accredited advice agency.

<https://www.thefru.org.uk/can-fru-help-you>

Law Centres Network

The Law Centres Network is the national membership body for Law Centres across England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, supporting free legal advice, casework and representation in areas like housing, immigration, welfare benefits and employment for those who cannot afford legal help.

<https://www.lawcentres.org.uk/>

LawWorks

LawWorks is a UK charity that connects people and community groups in need of legal support with volunteer legal professionals who provide free advice, pro bono casework and legal clinics.

<https://www.lawworks.org.uk>

Legal Choices

Plain-English information to help people understand legal issues, choose trusted advisers and navigate legal services.

<https://www.legalchoices.org.uk/>

Public Law Project (PLP)

'PLP employs specialist lawyers who assist individuals experiencing personal disadvantage, or charities or organisations representing the interests of marginalised or disadvantaged groups.'

<https://publiclawproject.org.uk/>

RCJ Advice

Law Centre offering free civil, family, housing, immigration and domestic abuse legal advice. Originally based in the Royal Courts of Justice, now delivering services nationally.

<https://www.rcjadvice.org.uk/>

Support Through Court

Support Through Court *'provide a safe space for people facing court alone. [Their] volunteers will listen to your story, help you to problem-solve and decide next steps'.*

<https://www.supportthroughcourt.org/>

Transparency Project

Dedicated to explaining and demystifying family law and courts in England and Wales, providing clear information and signposting to helpful resources. They do not offer direct legal services.

<https://transparencyproject.org.uk/resources/>

Which? Legal Advice

A paid subscription legal advice service run by Which?, offering access via phone and email to experienced legal advisers.

<https://legalservice.which.co.uk/>

Health & Medical

Action Against Medical Accidents (AvMA)

AvMA is the UK charity dedicated to patient safety and justice, offering free, independent advice and support via a helpline, written casework and inquest assistance to individuals harmed by avoidable medical incidents.

<https://www.avma.org.uk/>

Advocacy After Fatal Domestic Abuse (AAFDA)

Providing specialist advocacy and peer support to people bereaved through domestic abuse, suicide, or homicide. Offering emotional support, representation and guidance throughout formal investigations and legal proceedings.

<https://aafda.org.uk/>

The Advocacy Project

The Advocacy Project is a London-based charity providing free, independent advocacy services in health, social care and mental capacity matters. They support people to understand their rights, speak up in care decisions and make informed choices.

<https://www.advocacyproject.org.uk/>

The Brain Charity

Supporting anyone in the UK with a neurological condition, the Brain Charity can offer specialist legal advice.

<https://www.thebraincharity.org.uk/>

Macmillan

'[T]rained advisors, including cancer information specialist nurses can provide emotional support and practical information about all aspects of cancer.' Including advice on money and employment matters.

<https://www.macmillan.org.uk>

Mesothelioma UK

Has a legal panel of specialist solicitors who offer free, expert, no-win-no-fee legal advice and support to people diagnosed with mesothelioma (and their families), helping them access compensation and navigate time limits for claims.

<https://www.mesothelioma.uk.com/legal-advice/>

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS is a confidential hospital-based support service offering advice, information and help to patients, their families and carers navigating NHS care.

<https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/hospitals/what-is-pals-patient-advice-and-liaison-service/>

The Patients Association

Offers free guidance on medical negligence and lists accredited law firms that provide initial consultations with no financial risk.

<https://www.patients-association.org.uk/legal-advice>

POhWER

Provides free, independent advocacy, advice and information services to people experiencing disability, vulnerability, social exclusion, or distress. Their services include Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy (IMCA), Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA), Care Act Advocacy, and NHS Complaints Advocacy

<https://www.pohwer.net/>

Release

Offers free, confidential advice on drug use and drug laws. Staffed by legal and drug experts, the helpline provides tailored support on legal consequences, health and harm reduction issues and related social welfare problems.

<https://www.release.org.uk/>

Housing & Homelessness

Centrepont

Charity that provides accommodation, support services and legal and financial advice to young people aged 16–25 facing or experiencing homelessness.

<https://centrepont.org.uk/>

Housing Loss Prevention Advice Service (HLPAS)

HLPAS is a government-funded, means-free scheme that offers both early legal advice on housing, debt and welfare benefit issues for those at risk of losing their home and in-court duty representation during possession hearings regardless of financial circumstances.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-loss-prevention-advice-service-hlpas>

Justice for Tenants

Offering free advice, support and representation to renters, particularly on issues such as rent repayment orders, deposit disputes, evictions and housing disrepair.

<https://www.justicefortenants.org/>

Leasehold Advisory Service

Government-funded, independent advice body for residential leaseholders and park home owners. Providing legally qualified guidance, though it cannot undertake casework or provide formal representation.

<https://www.lease-advice.org/>

Shelter

Shelter's solicitors can *'provide free legal advice and attend court to help people who've lost their homes or are facing eviction.'*

<https://england.shelter.org.uk/>

Human Rights

The AIRE Centre (Advice on Individual Rights in Europe)

A UK-based charity that uses European and international human rights law to support vulnerable individuals across the UK and Europe by offering free legal advice and strategic litigation.

<https://www.airecentre.org/>

Detention Action

A human rights charity dedicated to defending the rights and improving the welfare of individuals held in immigration detention across the UK. They can provide direct support via casework services in Immigration Removal Centres and prisons.

<https://detentionaction.org.uk/>

Equality Advisory and Support Service (EASS)

EASS is a government-backed helpline offering free, confidential advice and assistance on discrimination and human rights issues. It supports individuals in understanding their rights, facilitates informal resolution, helps explore legal aid eligibility, but does not provide legal representation or advice during court proceedings

<https://www.equalityadvisoryservice.com/>

Liberty

Liberty can not give legal advice to individuals, but they signpost organisations that do, and they have many helpful guides.

<https://www.libertyhumanrights.org.uk/>

Immigration & Asylum

Asylum Aid

Provides free, expert legal advice and representation to asylum seekers and refugees, including those seeking help with immigration applications, detention reviews and protection claims.

<https://www.asylumaid.org.uk/>

Asylum Support Appeals Project (ASAP)

ASAP is a UK charity focused on preventing destitution among asylum seekers by providing free legal representation in appeals against Home Office refusals or withdrawals of housing and financial support from the Asylum Support Tribunal.

<https://www.asaproject.org/>

Bail for Immigration Detainees (BiD)

An independent charity providing *'legal advice, information and representation alongside research, policy advocacy and strategic litigation.'*

<https://www.biduk.org/>

British Red Cross

Offering support to asylum seekers, refugees and vulnerable migrants in the UK, including emergency assistance, one-on-one casework, family reunion help and advice on legal and welfare issues.

<https://www.redcross.org.uk/get-help/get-help-as-a-refugee>

Detention Action

A human rights charity dedicated to defending the rights and improving the welfare of individuals held in immigration detention across the UK. They can provide direct support via casework services in Immigration Removal Centres and prisons.

<https://detentionaction.org.uk/>

Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI)

JCWI is an independent UK charity campaigning for fairness in immigration, nationality and asylum law. It provides expert legal advice and representation, free helplines for people without immigration status and accessible toolkits.

<https://jcw.org.uk/>

Kalayaan: Justice for Migrant Domestic Workers

Kalayaan is a UK charity dedicated to supporting migrant domestic workers. They provide tailored immigration and employment rights advice, emergency accommodation and assistance to survivors of trafficking.

<https://www.kalayaan.org.uk/>

Kanlungan

The Kanlungan Filipino Consortium is a UK-registered charity composed of several Filipino and Southeast/East Asian grassroots organisations that work collaboratively to support migrants and the diaspora community. They provide culturally sensitive advice and advocacy on mental health, welfare, employment and immigration issues.

<https://www.kanlungan.org.uk/>

Migrant Help

Core services include asylum support and specialist help for victims of slavery and human trafficking.

<https://www.migranthelpuk.org/>

Praxis

Providing advice and support for migrants and refugees.

<https://www.praxis.org.uk/>

Rainbow Migration

Offers free and confidential legal, social and emotional support to LGBTIQ+ people going through the asylum or immigration process.

<https://www.rainbowmigration.org.uk/>

Refugee Legal Support

Charity working with displaced individuals, providing free legal advice, immigration assistance and multilingual resources for asylum seekers and migrants navigating family reunion and other immigration processes.

<https://refugeelegalsupport.org/>

Right to Remain

Migrant-led charity dedicated to supporting asylum seekers, refugees and migrants in securing their right to stay in the UK. They provide free, accessible information, legal resources and training through tools such as their online [Toolkit](#).

<https://righttoremain.org.uk/>

Settled

Assists vulnerable EU, EEA, Swiss, and Ukrainian citizens navigating immigration issues with free, accredited advice on the EU Settlement Scheme.

<https://settled.org.uk/>

Windrush Justice Clinic

Provides free, independent legal support to victims of the Windrush scandal, helping them apply for compensation under the Windrush Compensation Scheme.

<https://www.windrushjc.org/>

LGBTQ+

Galop

LGBT+ anti-abuse charity, providing dedicated helplines, advocacy and casework to support LGBT+ victims of domestic abuse, hate crime, sexual violence, conversion therapy and honour-based abuse.

<https://www.galop.org.uk/>

Rainbow Migration

Offers free and confidential legal, social and emotional support to LGBTQI+ people going through the asylum or immigration process.

<https://www.rainbowmigration.org.uk/>

Trans Legal Clinic

Free advice and casework for transgender and non-binary individuals. Areas of focus include gender recognition, healthcare advocacy, housing and homelessness, gender-based violence, discrimination and public law challenges.

<https://www.translegalclinic.com/>

Mental Health

The Advocacy Project

The Advocacy Project is a London-based charity providing free, independent advocacy services in health, social care and mental capacity matters. They support people to understand their rights, speak up in care decisions and make informed choices.

<https://www.advocacyproject.org.uk/>

Mind

Mind have a range of useful guides on different aspects of mental health-related legal rights.

<https://www.mind.org.uk/>

POhWER

Provides free, independent advocacy, advice and information services to people experiencing disability, vulnerability, social exclusion, or distress. Their services include Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy (IMCA), Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA), Care Act Advocacy, and NHS Complaints Advocacy

<https://www.pohwer.net/>

Rethink

'The Rethink Mental Illness Advice Service provides a trusted resource for information on mental illness, mental health laws, and guidance for carers.'

<https://www.rethink.org/>

Money & Benefits

Debt Advice Foundation

A registered UK charity, providing free legal debt advice and support to anyone struggling with loans, credit, or debt.

<https://www.debtadvicefoundation.org/>

Money Helper

Advice on how to access free, impartial money and debt guidance, including help with budgeting, benefits, savings, pensions, scams and financial disputes

<https://www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en/getting-help-and-advice>

Rightsnet

Rightsnet is an online hub for welfare rights advisers, offering legal updates, peer support, tools and training. Includes a 'resources' section which signposts useful organisations.

<https://www.rightsnet.org.uk/resources>

StepChange

Free debt advice service, offering confidential guidance and tailored financial solutions.

<https://www.stepchange.org/>

Surviving Economic Abuse

Providing a Financial Support Line for Victims of Domestic Abuse, offering *'specialist advice to anyone experiencing domestic abuse who is in financial difficulty.'*

<https://survivingeconomicabuse.org/>

Turn2us

A national charity that helps people experiencing financial hardship access welfare benefits and find charitable grants.

<https://www.turn2us.org.uk/>

Z2k

London-based anti-poverty charity providing free frontline advice, casework and representation in Disability Benefits Tribunals to low-income, disabled and at-risk individuals.

<https://z2k.org>

Prison

Howard League for Penal Reform

'The only frontline national legal team specialising in the legal rights and entitlements of children and young people in custody.'

<https://howardleague.org/legal-work/advice-line/>

Not Beyond Redemption

Provides free family law advice and court representation to incarcerated mothers, helping them re-establish or maintain relationships with their children through pro bono legal clinics and court support.

<https://notbeyondredemption.co.uk/>

Prisoners' Advice Service (PAS)

Offers 'free legal advice and support to adult prisoners throughout England and Wales regarding their legal, human and healthcare rights, conditions of imprisonment and the application of Prison Law and the Prison Rules.'

<https://www.prisonersadvice.org.uk/>

Social Care

Access Social Care

Provides free legal advice and support to people with social care needs, helping them secure the care they are entitled to through community partnerships, online resources and legal advocacy networks.

<https://www.accesscharity.org.uk/>

The Advocacy Project

The Advocacy Project is a London-based charity providing free, independent advocacy services in health, social care and mental capacity matters. They support people to understand their rights, speak up in care decisions and make informed choices.

<https://www.advocacyproject.org.uk/>

Women's Rights

Centre for Women's Justice

Produces a number of guides signposting specialist legal advice.

<https://www.centreforwomensjustice.org.uk/>

Not Beyond Redemption

Provides free family law advice and court representation to incarcerated mothers, helping them re-establish or maintain relationships with their children through pro bono legal clinics and court support.

<https://notbeyondredemption.co.uk/>

FLAWS (Finding Legal Options for Women Survivors)

FLAWS is a national legal support project for survivors of domestic abuse, run by RCJ Advice in partnership with Rights of Women. It offers confidential advice via phone or email, helps users apply for protective orders through the [CourtNav](#) tool and connects individuals with legal aid solicitors or pro bono assistance.

<https://www.flaws.org.uk/>

Pregnant the Screwed

Charity dedicated to ending the 'motherhood penalty' by supporting mothers facing pregnancy and maternity discrimination. Providing advice guides, legal advice by referral and peer support for those going through an employment tribunal.

<https://pregnantthenscrewed.com/>

Rights of Women

Charity *'dedicated to providing frontline legal advice to women experiencing all forms of violence against women and girls in England and Wales.'*

<https://www.rightsofwomen.org.uk/>

Southall Black Sisters

Southall Black Sisters *'conducts specialist domestic abuse casework, delivered by and for Black and minoritised women.'*

Covering the boroughs of Ealing, Hounslow and Hillingdon.

<https://southallblacksisters.org.uk/>

Women in Prison

Offering a variety of support resources for women affected by the criminal justice system, including topic guides on work rights in prison, temporary release and legal processes.

<https://womeninprison.org.uk/>

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