



The Law Society

From the President

To Presidents and Secretaries of Local Law Societies

By email

7 February 2018

Dear colleague

Early advice campaign

Last November, the Law Society launched a campaign calling for the Government to reinstate legal aid for early advice in housing and family cases.

The campaign has been well received with positive coverage in the press, on social media and in Parliament. **Now we need your help.**

To press the Government on this issue, we are inviting practitioners to write to their local MP, asking them to urge the Lord Chancellor, Rt Hon David Gauke MP, to reintroduce legal aid for early advice.

I would be grateful if you could encourage your members to participate. We have set up an online tool, and a template letter, which allows members to write to their MP in just a few minutes. You can find it here: <http://bit.ly/early-advice-campaign>

Our campaign followed the release of new research from Ipsos MORI, commissioned by the Law Society, which shows a clear statistical link between receiving professional legal advice early and resolving a problem sooner.

As you are aware, a lack of early legal advice can create unnecessary costs for the taxpayer due to cases going to court which could have been resolved earlier. Worsening legal problems can also create other knock-on costs for the public purse, by potentially causing issues such as poor health, homelessness and debt.

The Government announced in October 2017 that they are reviewing the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012, and we expect the review to conclude this summer. We are calling on the Government to bring back legal aid for early advice as part of this review.

I would be grateful for your support. If you have any case studies, examples or ideas regarding our campaign, do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

Joe Egan
President