

# advocate



## Advocate Monthly Top Ten

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PRO  
BONO  
WEEK  
2024

advocate



## Highlights from Pro Bono Week 2024

Pro Bono Week is always a high point on the calendar for Advocate and this year was no exception. We organised and attended events all over the country.

Here are some highlights from the week:

- On Monday, we attended the official launch event. The panel included the new Solicitor General Sarah Sackman KC MP, Advocate General for Scotland Catherine Smith KC, and Pro Bono Silk of the Year 2024 Samantha Hillas KC.
- On Tuesday, 100 young lawyers attended our [young lawyers event](#) held in partnership with the [Junior London Solicitors Litigation Association](#), [London Young Lawyers Group](#), [Middle Temple Young Barristers' Association](#), [Pro Bono Connect](#) and [The Bar Council of England and Wales' Young Barristers' Committee](#). We were honoured to hear from Lord Hodge, Deputy President of the Supreme Court, who spoke about the importance of pro bono to the rule of law and access to justice, as well as the numerous career development opportunities for young lawyers available through pro bono work. [Read Lord Hodge's speech in full.](#)
- On Wednesday, we celebrated one year of [Pro Bono Expert Support](#), which offers support to barristers when taking on pro bono cases in areas such as translation

- and expert witness reports. We are delighted that the scheme has now [expanded to bring in costs lawyers to help obtain pro bono costs orders](#).
- Our Northern Circuit caseworkers, Emily and Chloe, helped organise the first ever Manchester Pro Bono Awards that took place on Wednesday with the [Greater Manchester Pro Bono Committee](#). Congratulations to all the winners, particularly [Kings Chambers](#) for winning Chambers of the Year, and [Michael Jones KC](#) for winning Barrister of the Year.
  - On Thursday, our CEO Rebecca Wilkie chaired a panel discussion on supporting and empowering clients in distress. Attendees heard from District Judge Lynda Nightingale, Louise McCarthy ([Sidley Austin LLP](#)), Naga Kandiah ([MTC Solicitors](#)), Rebecca Norris ([Trauma Informed Law](#)) and Ollie Persey ([Garden Court Chambers](#)), who shared advice on tips and coping strategies for working with vulnerable clients on a pro bono basis.
  - On Friday, our Midland Circuit caseworker, Charlotte, attended Birmingham Law Society's event to network and share pro bono volunteering opportunities with members, as well as delivering a session on pro bono to barristers, pupils and clerks at St Philips Chambers.
  - On Saturday, our North Eastern Circuit caseworker Jess, and trustee Joe Wilson, spoke at the [Institute of Barristers' Clerks](#) conference about the vital role that chambers' staff play in facilitating pro bono.

Thank you to all those who got involved in the week including those sets that welcomed our team to speak at internal events. Read our [CEO's blog on her reflections from Pro Bono Week](#).

More Pro Bono Week highlights



## Nominations now open for the 2025 Bar Pro Bono Awards

The Bar Pro Bono Awards are an important opportunity to recognise the pro bono work of barristers and chambers nationwide. Winners will be announced at the ceremony taking place on 6th May 2025.

There are nine categories in which individuals, initiatives and chambers can be nominated. Please submit your nominations by Friday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025. We are delighted that the stories of the winners of 2024 Bar Pro Bono Awards have been published in Counsel Magazine - read parts [one](#) and [two](#) of the coverage.

[Nominate now](#)



## The Bar's blogging in Pro Bono Week

This Pro Bono Week, the Bar Council published several blogs highlighting the important role that pro bono work can play in career and practice development.

Our Northern Caseworker, Emily, shared how her work at Advocate was crucial for securing her pupillage. Advocate Panel Member Edward Lamb KC of Deka Chambers explained how pro bono helped him take silk, and our Vice Chair Sarah Abram KC of Brick Court Chambers spoke about how pro bono work gave her lots of "firsts" in her career in advocacy.

[Read the blogs](#)

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## Advocate Statistics



## Advocate barristers team up with solicitors to assist family at inquest

*Trigger warning: mentions suicide*

A team of lawyers supported the family of a young man who tragically took his own life in 2022 after battling with severe mental health issues.

Panel Members [Sunyana Sharma of 3PB](#) and [Markus Findlay of Doughty Street Chambers](#) volunteered to assist at the inquest, which took place in September 2024. Sunyana and Markus worked with solicitors from [Arnold & Porter](#) through Advocate's partner project [Pro Bono Connect](#), who included [Adela Williams](#), [Jacqueline Mulryne](#), [Eleri Abreo](#), and [Katya Farkas](#).



[The Prevention of Future Deaths report](#) published after the inquest highlighted the importance of the need for better mental health training within the police. Commenting on the support, the family said:

*"[We] could have never got to the point where Ryan's case was heard by a jury without the support of Advocate and the caseworkers. Your expertise, dedication and unwavering support were instrumental in navigating us through this challenging time".*

[Read the full story](#)

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**Simon Miller**  
Harcourt Chambers  
& Dads House

[Dads House](#) won the Pro Bono & Social Responsibility Initiative of the Year award in the [2024 Bar Pro Bono Awards](#). [Simon Miller](#), barrister at Harcourt Chambers, specialises in children law and volunteers at the Dads House Family Law Clinic.

Simon shared about the work he does at the clinic to assist families navigating the challenges of the family courts.

## Barrister story - Simon Miller

*"Pro bono work is even more vital for the family courts today. With the legal aid cuts and now the cost-of-living crisis, many people are left with no funds to afford costly legal advice and representation. My advice is simple – it is hugely rewarding to take a client from their first appointment with us to final hearing and see the joy on their face when they know they will see their child again."*

[Read Simon's story](#)

## Shout out to Panel Members...

<p>7</p> <p><b>Jasmine Knapman</b> 29 Bedford Row</p>	<p>8</p> <p><b>Lauren Starmer</b> St Philips Chambers</p>	<p>9</p> <p><b>Jenn Lawrence</b> Monckton Chambers</p>
<p>Our many thanks to Jasmine Knapman of 29 Bedford Row for representing a father at a 4-day Fact Finding Hearing in a private children matter where he was seeking contact with his daughter. The father praised Jasmine for her excellent representation at the hearing. Jasmine has completed Advocate's Pupil Pledge and has now worked on a number of cases with us.</p>	<p>Thank you to Lauren Starmer of St Philips Chambers for representing grandparents of a vulnerable child at a Dispute Resolution Appointment (DRA) earlier this month. Thanks to Lauren's help at the DRA, the judge made a final order for the grandchild to live with her grandparents, conferring parental responsibility so they can move forward to care for their grandchild.</p>	<p>We are very grateful to Jenn Lawrence of Monckton Chambers for successfully representing an asylum seeker in an asylum appeal. He had claimed asylum on the basis that he had been accused by the Iraqi state of supporting the Kurdistan Workers' Party, and arbitrarily detained and tortured for three months as a result. The Tribunal allowed the appeal on Refugee Convention and Article 3 HRA grounds.</p>
<p>Thank you, Jasmine</p>	<p>Thank you, Lauren</p>	<p>Thank you, Jenn</p>

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## Pro Bono Recognition List of England & Wales 2025

If you have completed 25 hours or more of pro bono work in 2024, you can appear on the next [Pro Bono Recognition List of England and Wales](#). The next Recognition List will be published in 2025 to recognise barristers and solicitors who have supported access to justice by undertaking pro bono work in 2024.

Find out more and add your name

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