



## BAR COUNCIL NEWS UPDATE – MONDAY 11 MARCH 2019

### Sexual harassment

**The Times (print and online)** – The Times reports that Lady Justice Hallett and Lady Justice Davies have said women lawyers are still facing sexual harassment from colleagues.

The Court of Appeal judges were speaking in a podcast produced for International Women’s Day by the Judicial Office. “When we hold events around the country,” Lady Justice Hallett said, “I do get young women coming up telling me stories that are horrifying – that are still happening.”

**Sam Mercer, Head of Equality and Diversity at the Bar Council**, is quoted. She said: “Discussing harassment and other scenarios in chambers is proving a great way to start difficult conversations over behaviours and attitudes. We hope this will encourage victims to step forward and colleagues to speak out.”

### Litigation funding

**Daily Express** - Litigation specialist Therium is to provide £1million in not-for-profit funding to people struggling to afford legal costs as it looks to tackle the “drastic consequences” of Government cuts, reports the Daily Express.

Therium is reported to be teaming up with Labour peer Lord Falconer to fund cases and law centres in need of support in what is believed to be an industry first. As part of the initiative, the organisation will focus on the advancement of human rights, equality and diversity, as well as the protection of children, the elderly, the disabled, asylum seekers and other disadvantaged groups.

An initial £1 million a year will be put up, with the figure likely to increase.

Access to legal aid has plummeted, says the Express, with funding falling by 20 per cent since 2013 to £1.6 billion a year in 2018. Legal aid stood at around £40 per head in 2010, but by 2018 this had fallen to just £24 a head, reports the Express.

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Happy [#InternationalWomensDay](#)! All day, we'll be sharing examples of positive influence from groups, individuals & students working to [#BalanceTheBar](#), 100 years after women were first able to become lawyers. Keep an eye on our Twitter & tell us your vision for the [#Next100Years](#).



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Esther Gamble: "I encourage men at the Bar to work part-time to spend more time with their families. I want to see a future where having a work-life balance is so normal that women don't feel disadvantaged by trying to achieve one."

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