



## BAR COUNCIL NEWS UPDATE – WEDNESDAY 1 NOVEMBER

### The citizen and the state

[Politics Home](#) - **Chair of the Bar, Andrew Langdon QC** explains why, when citizens' lives are turned upside down by wrongful decision-making by the State, charity cannot – and should not – be the answer.

In the article he writes: an immigrant wrongfully imprisoned in a removal centre; a disabled citizen denied entitlement to a Personal Independence Payment; an erroneous HMRC demand for tax which is not due; and a Local Authority's wrongful refusal to recognise a child's special educational needs; each of these four scenarios is neither fanciful nor uncommon. Each pitches the citizen against the state, and the outcome for the citizen, if a wrongful decision is not put right, can be dramatic – life-changing, not only for them but also for those who depend upon or care for them.

**Andrew Langdon QC** goes on to say "I cannot help but feel that society is neglecting this problem at its peril. Quite apart from the moral imperative to put right what has gone wrong, every disaffected citizen, the victim of an uncorrected wrong perpetrated by the state, represents a failure of the rule of law. The Bar Council considers that we have a duty to shine a light at this problem. [We are bringing together some judges, pro bono lawyers and others to discuss this issue at a public event soon.](#)"

Read the full article [here](#).

### Legal aid and LASPO

[The Guardian](#) - Impact of cuts to legal aid to come under review

The justice secretary, David Liddington, has committed his department to review the deep cuts imposed on legal aid by the coalition government in 2012.

In a written statement to parliament, Liddington said: "Our legal aid system is a fundamental pillar of access to justice, accounting for more than a fifth of the Ministry of Justice's budget. He goes on to say: "The reforms within LASPO were founded on delivering better value for money for taxpayers by reducing the cost of the scheme and discouraging unnecessary and adversarial litigation, while ensuring that legal aid continues to be available for the highest priority cases

**Andrew Landon QC, the Chair of the Bar**, said: "This long-awaited review offers the government an important opportunity to take stock of the damage caused by the unprecedented cuts to legal aid that LASPO introduced and to reassess the value of justice to citizens.

"This review comes not a moment too soon; society has become increasingly aware of the importance of access to justice in underpinning the rule of law and our democratic constitutional arrangements. The announcement follows several years of sustained pressure from the Bar Council and many other organisations who work to promote the public interest of our citizens."

The long-anticipated consultation will run into next year and is likely to focus on whether the intended £450m a year savings were achieved and whether access to justice has been restricted. View the full story [here](#).

Following up on the LASPO review, [Politics Home](#) quote **Chair of the Bar, Andrew Langdon QC** saying "The Bar Council looks forward to engaging constructively with this review and will continue to press for a wide scope which includes the impact of LASPO on society and considers the combined and interactive effect of legal aid cuts with welfare and other civil justice reforms."

## Justice

[Evening Standard](#) – British Ethiopian citizen, Andy Tsege charged on death row for more than three years in Ethiopia and UK leaders have failed to get him home, according to the Evening Standard.

Bar Council concludes that flagrant breaches of the rule of law make Andy's continued detention unlawful.

Read more [here](#).

## Gay lawyers

[Gay Star Business](#) - Being an out gay lawyer hasn't been easy – but the profession is changing

**Simon Robinson, Barrister at Five Paper Chambers and member of the Bar Council's Equality and Diversity and Social Mobility Committee and its panel of Disability Advisors** writes about his experience at the Bar.

The recent 'Sexuality at the Bar' report is a valuable and powerful contribution to the ongoing work of encouraging diversity within the legal profession. It found that [over half of LGBT lawyers in the UK](#) are experiencing homophobic discrimination at work or while studying.

Robinson discusses challenging homophobia among lawyers. He says: The Bar Council has done a lot of work over the years to push for diversity within the Bar. Including pushing back against harassment and providing support to LGBT+ barristers.

From my own experience, I know that it can be difficult to challenge prejudice. But I also know that the Bar Council is working to challenge homophobia, biphobia and transphobia.

The 'Wellbeing' project is a great example of how the Bar Council is working to support mental health issues at the Bar, including those linked to sexuality and harassment.

Pride is a great way to raise LGBT+ visibility within the profession, including on three occasions having the Chair of the Bar Council march with us.

Read the full article [here](#).

**TOP BAR COUNCIL TWEETS @ <https://twitter.com/thebarcouncil>**

Pinned Tweet



**The Bar Council** @thebarcouncil · Oct 31

#OneBar17 Top 10 reason #6 to BOOK NOW: [bit.ly/2x3WZn4](https://bit.ly/2x3WZn4) . Professor @richardsusskind. #riseofthemachines [bit.ly/2gKcxKh](https://bit.ly/2gKcxKh)

# Top 10 reasons to attend

*The 32nd Annual Bar and Young Bar Conference*

## Professor Richard Susskind OBE

# #6

Professor Richard Susskind will offer reassuring (or frightening) thoughts on the impact of technology and AI on the profession.



🗨️ 5 ❤️ 2 |||



**The Bar Council** @thebarcouncil · 3h

Being an out gay lawyer hasn't been easy – but the profession is changing  
@SimonRRobinson [gaystarnews.com/article/out-ga...](https://gaystarnews.com/article/out-ga...) via @getsocial\_io



**Being an out gay lawyer hasn't been easy – but the ...**

Writing after a report that says over half of LGBT lawyers face homophobia, gay lawyer Simon Robinson writes about his experience of being out

[gaystarnews.com](https://gaystarnews.com)

🗨️ 1 🔄 7 ❤️ 4 |||



**The Bar Council** @thebarcouncil · 7h

The Government must help rescue British man Andy Tsege from death row



**The Government must help rescue British man Andy Tsege from deat...**

Inside the front cover of my passport, I am always reassured to read that the UK Government offers me "such assistance and protection as may be nec...  
standard.co.uk



**The Bar Council** @thebarcouncil · 22h

Speaking up for the Rule of Law – a Lawyer's Perspective in Modern Iran -Dr Shirin Ebadi to deliver lecture on 9 Nov [bit.ly/2g11FNe](https://bit.ly/2g11FNe)

