





**FAMILY LAW CONFERENCE**  
**WEDNESDAY 25 JUNE 2025 – 09:30 – 16:15**  
**MARSHAM COURT HOTEL, BOURNEMOUTH**

COST
£110 Solicitor Member/Associate Member/Trainee Solicitor £150 Non-Member of BDLS
<b>If you would like to attend half a day only, please email <a href="mailto:mandy@bournemouthlaw.com">mandy@bournemouthlaw.com</a> Costs:</b> £85 Solicitor Member/Associate Member/Trainee Solicitor £135 Non-Member of BDLS
CPD
5.5 Hours
BOOKING
Please book online at: <a href="http://www.bournemouthlaw.com/bournemouth-district-law-society-lectures">www.bournemouthlaw.com/bournemouth-district-law-society-lectures</a>
HOTEL PARKING
<b>Marsham Court Hotel, 3 Russell Cotes Road, Bournemouth BH1 3AB</b> <b>Parking:</b> This is at the rear of the hotel (postcode BH1 3AU) No parking charge. On arrival, please inform hotel reception of your car registration number and, when you leave, ask for the exit code to raise the exit barrier. Alternatively, there is parking at Berry Court in St Peter's Road, Central Car Park in Upper Hinton Road or street parking around the hotel.



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09:00 – 09:30	Registration and refreshments
09:30	<p><b>WELCOME</b>  <b>Emma Hamilton Cole</b></p> <p>Emma is the co-chair of the BDLS litigation subcommittee and sits on the local Family Justice Board as the Law Society and Resolution representative. She works as a solicitor, mediator and collaborative practitioner and is a professional practice consultant for local mediators.</p> 
09:30 – 10:45 1 hour 15 mins	<p><b>SPECIAL GUARDIANSHIP ORDERS, SECTION 37 CHILDREN ACT 1989 AND COSTS</b>  <b>Marianna Lo Conte and Andrew Skinner, College Chambers</b></p> <p><b>Andrew Skinner</b> Andrew specialises in all areas of law relating to Children. Within private law proceedings he has extensive experience dealing with cases across the spectrum; from serious violence cases (including murder); cases with an international element including abduction and child abuse; residence and specific issue applications to the most straightforward contact disputes. Whatever the case it is approached with the same diligence; the aim being to secure the best possible outcome for the client with the minimum of distress. Andrew also</p> 

	<p>undertakes all forms of public law work. He is best known for his work on behalf of families and Guardians on behalf of the children. Many acknowledge that within this field all clients, though parents in particular, are usually under great emotional strain. Andrew strives to put all at ease during all stages of the litigation and is known to be "user friendly", whilst being straight talking when required! In addition to the problems for married couples, Andrew receives instructions on behalf of cohabitants, civil partners, co-owners and family members in relation to all areas of family disputes</p> <p><b>Marianna Lo Conte</b> Marianna is instructed to represent parties at all stages of private children proceedings, including multi-day fact-finding hearings. She has been instructed in cases involving parental alienation and domestic abuse, including where there have been allegations of rape, a risk of honour-based violence and coercive and controlling behaviour. Marianna also has experience in cases involving internal and external relocation, the making and discharge of Special Guardianship Orders and applications for enforcement. Marianna has been praised for her attention to detail and conscientious approach, and prides herself in her ability to deal with clients sensitively and give firm advice where necessary.</p> 
<p><b>10:45 – 11:00</b> <b>15 minutes</b></p>	<p><b>Refreshments</b></p>
<p><b>11:00 – 11:30</b> <b>30 minutes</b></p>	<p><b>ENSURING TOXICOLOGY TESTING SUPPORTS JUSTICE FOR ALL FAMILIES REGARDLESS OF THEIR RACE, ENVIRONMENT OR PRIOR DRUG</b></p> <p><b>Ryan Mason, DNA Legal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>General update regarding drug and alcohol testing with some do's and don'ts</b></li> <li>• <b>Advice on how to ensure reports are not misinterpreted</b></li> <li>• <b>Discussion on racial bias</b></li> <li>• <b>Providing simple, easy to read reports</b></li> <li>• <b>Discussing the new and revolutionary alcohol monitoring device exclusive to DNA legal</b></li> </ul> <p>Ryan Mason joined DNA Legal in 2023 and has worked closely with toxicologists, solicitors, legal assistants and social workers across the country to ensure simple, hassle-free testing. DNA Legal leads the industry in delivering results that truly offer a transformation of people's lives. The presentation is designed to ensure that professionals understand the practical application of testing and gain critical insights that can have a significant impact on their cases.</p> 
<p><b>11:30 – 12:30</b> <b>1 hour</b></p>	<p><b>LEGAL UPDATE – CHILDREN</b></p> <p><b>HHJ Christopher Simmonds</b></p> <p><b>An overview of recent cases in both public and private law children</b></p> <p><b>Followed by a Q&amp;A session on family work in Dorset.</b></p>

	<p>HHJ Christopher Simmonds is a Family Circuit Judge, the Designated Family Judge for Dorset and National Lead Judge for Divorce. He was originally a District Judge appointed in 2010. He sat in the Principal Registry of the Family Division until his transfer to the Western Circuit in November 2015. He has been the Lead Regional Judge for the Court of Protection (South West), a Commissioner of the Judicial Appointments Commission and former Course Director at the Judicial College (Family). Before being appointed he was a Solicitor and Partner in the firm of Davis Simmonds &amp; Donaghey specialising in Public Law Proceedings and a member of the Children Panel. He is editor of A Practical Guide to Family Proceedings and one of the contributors to The Dictionary of Public Children Law</p>	
<p><b>12:30 – 13:30</b></p>	<p><b>Lunch</b></p>	
<p><b>13:00 – 13:30</b></p>	<p><b>Registration and Refreshments (for afternoon delegates)</b></p>	
<p><b>13:30 – 13:45</b> <b>15 minutes</b></p>	<p><b>MODERN TRENDS IN ONLINE COMMUNICATION FOR SEPARATING FAMILIES</b> <b>Alicia Farran, OurFamilyWizard</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The current risks of online communication platforms</b></li> <li>• <b>How to falsify, edit or tamper with communication records</b></li> <li>• <b>Real examples and scenarios of parents submitting or using falsified communication records in their proceedings</b></li> <li>• <b>An outline of how the tools available within the OurFamilyWizard platform safeguard against these risks and provide a secure space for better, child-focussed communication</b></li> </ul> <p>Alicia Farran is a Legal Associate at OurFamilyWizard. Alicia has been part of the Family Law community for over 5 years previously working as a Family Law Paralegal in some of the top Family Law firms in both Birmingham and London. Alicia works with Courts, Chambers, Firms, CAFCASS, Mediators, Organisations and Charities to help parents with their communication.</p>	
<p><b>13:45 – 14:30</b> <b>45 minutes</b></p>	<p><b>TOLATA</b> <b>Hamish Dunlop, 3PB</b></p> <p>Hamish’s family law practice is concerned with the financial claims of: spouses on divorce; co-habitees on separation and dependants from the estate of a deceased. In the context of financial provision on divorce, he has particular expertise in cases involving: family businesses; professional clients and farms. Given the increased popularity in digital and crypto-assets, Hamish has developed a specialism in this regard and is experienced in advising clients as to the implications that these assets have on financial remedy proceedings and is a leading presence in ultra-high-net-worth cases. He advises and represents co-habitees, co-owners and other family members on property issues including: legal and beneficial ownerships (and the Court’s powers under TOLATA); promisory and proprietary estoppel. He advises on Inheritance Act claims. He is ranked in the latest editions of Legal 500 and Chambers Partners. He is described in Chambers and Partners (2022) as: a barrister “who covers every relevant point meticulously and does not do half-measures.” “He is great with</p>	

	<p>clients, has a good eye for detail, flexible in his approach and has real commitment to a case." Hamish was Head of the 3PB Family Group until January 2019. He is now Deputy Head and Head of Finance.</p>
<p><b>14:30 – 15:00</b> <b>30 minutes</b></p>	<p><b>SECTION 1 APPLICATIONS</b> <b>Mark Elliott, 3PB</b></p> <p>Mark Elliott is a family law specialist with particular experience in matrimonial finance and private children disputes. Before being called to the Bar, Mark served as an Army Officer and an Operations Officer with the United Nations. These roles provided valuable experience in negotiating and mediating in high-profile, high-pressure environments. Mark regularly advises and represents clients in financial cases under the Matrimonial Causes Act 1973 and Schedule 1 of the Children Act 1989 as well as trusts of land cases, pre-nuptial agreements and other co-habitation disputes. Recently Mark has acted on a number of high net-worth cases involving material non-disclosure and assets outside of the jurisdiction. Mark has considerable experience of private children cases including those involving difficult or demanding clients and/or litigants-in-person, complex fact-finding hearings, the appointment of guardians, leave to remove and risk of abduction (both within and outside of the jurisdiction).</p> 
<p><b>15:00 – 15:15</b> <b>15 minutes</b></p>	<p><b>Refreshments</b></p>
<p><b>15:15 – 16:15</b> <b>1 hour</b></p>	<p><b>RECENT FRC CASES</b> <b>DJ John Bridger</b></p> <p>DJ John Bridger is the lead judge for the financial remedies court for Dorset and Hampshire. He has been a District Judge at Bournemouth since 2018 and was formerly a partner in a local firm and sat as a DDJ for a number of years and sat at all courts in Dorset and Hants at some stage</p> 
<p><b>16:15</b></p>	<p><b>Close</b></p>

**Please book online at:**

<https://www.bournemouthlaw.com/bournemouth-district-law-society-lectures>

**Course Notes:** For environmental reasons, BDLS will no longer be providing printed course notes at lectures. Lecture notes will be emailed to delegates in advance for either printing or accessing via their laptop or alternative device on the day.

**Payment for lectures:** Please be aware that payment must be received at the office **before** the lecture takes place. Course bookings will only be confirmed upon payment. All payments are to be paid by BACS. No refunds within 7 days of the course.