



DOUGHTY STREET'S HOUSING CONFERENCE 2023

Domestic Abuse in Housing

Tuesday 28th March 2023

Programme

09:00 Registration

09:30 Welcome

[Sarah Steinhardt](#), Joint Head of Doughty Street's Housing and Social Welfare Team

09:35 Keynote Speech: Changing understandings of domestic abuse: recent history and the legal perspective

[Harriet Wistrich](#), Founder and Director of the Centre for Women's Justice

10:00 Panel Session 1: Domestic abuse – homelessness and allocations

Chair

[Jo Underwood](#), Solicitor, Shelter

Speakers

[Martin Westgate KC](#), Barrister, Doughty Street Chambers

[Izzy Mulholland](#), Solicitor, Public Interest Law Centre

[Zia Nabi](#), Barrister, Doughty Street Chambers

The panel will explore key issues arising in homelessness applications for domestic abuse survivors, including vulnerability and whether it is reasonable to continue to occupy. They will address how homelessness duties are to be performed, including suitability and out of borough offers. They will also consider how allocation policies should cater for victims of domestic abuse and explore potential judicial review challenges to allocation decisions.

11:15 Refreshments

11:45

Panel Session 2: Working with survivors of domestic abuse

Chair

[Zimran Samuel MBE](#), Barrister, Doughty Street Chambers

Speakers

[Saskia Hagelberg](#), sexual health team leader, Solace Women's Aid

[Laura Tomsa](#), Domestic Abuse Lead, Barnardo's

An exploration of the unique considerations that arise when working with survivors of domestic abuse. The panel will discuss soft skills needed to work safely with vulnerable clients, including children.

12:30

Special topic: Children, domestic abuse and housing

Speaker

[Shu Shin Luh](#), Barrister, Doughty Street Chambers

An overview of the unique legal issues arising in domestic abuse and housing cases involving children and practical tips in navigating these cases.

13:15

Lunch

14:15

Seminar 1: Domestic abuse and tenancies – the common problems

Chair

[Dominic Preston](#), Barrister, Doughty Street Chambers

Speakers

[Sue James](#), Chief Executive, Legal Action Group

[Daniel Clarke](#), Barrister, Doughty Street Chambers

[Marie Paris](#), Barrister, Doughty Street Chambers

The seminar will consider a range of common problems faced by clients in domestic abuse and housing cases, including the 'nuts and bolts' of tenant's rights, anti-social behaviour, succession and benefits issues, with a focus on providing practical tips. There will also be an update on the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

15:30

Refreshments

16:00

Seminar 2: Domestic abuse, housing and the Equality Act 2010

Chair

[Alice Irving](#), *Barrister, Doughty Street Chambers*

Speakers

[Jamie Burton KC](#), *Barrister, Doughty Street Chambers*

[Sarah Steinhardt](#), *Barrister, Doughty Street Chambers*

The seminar will provide an introduction to key concepts in the Equality Act 2010 that are relevant in the domestic abuse context, including sex as a protected characteristic. It will highlight when the Equality Act 2010 might be relevant and useful in domestic abuse cases. It will also explore specific instances of potential discrimination challenges.

17:15

Closing address

[Martin Westgate KC](#), *Barrister, Doughty Street Chambers*

6:00

Drinks reception

BIOGRAPHIES



SARAH STEINHARDT

Doughty Street Chambers

Sarah is the joint head of the Housing and Social Welfare Team. She specialises in housing and community care, education and discrimination law, and in related public law. Sarah is particularly noted for her expertise in discrimination in housing and other discrimination outside of the employment field, and she enjoys working proactively and imaginatively to achieve positive outcomes for clients. She is astute to public funding issues and costs and always happy to discuss possible strategies at an early stage.



KEYNOTE: HARRIET WISTRICH

Centre for Women's Justice

Harriet Wistrich is founder and director of the Centre for Women's Justice 2016, a multi partner organisation aimed at holding the state to account in relation to violence against women and girls. She is a solicitor and worked for many years with Birnberg Peirce Ltd. She won the Liberty Human Rights Lawyer of the Year award 2014, Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year 2018 and Law Society legal personality of the year 2019. She is a founder of the campaign group Justice for Women and trustee of the charity, the Emma Humphreys Memorial Prize.

She acted for: DSD and NBV in the Supreme Court case against the Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis ([2018] UKSC 11) which established a duty to investigate under Article 3 ECHR; the same claimants in the successful judicial review of the parole board decision to release John Worboys; for young women formerly pimped into prostitution in a challenge of the Disclosure and Barring Scheme requirement that they disclose criminal convictions for soliciting (QSA and others v SSHD and SSD); and (together with colleagues at CWJ) she represented the claimant in R(EVAW) v DPP.

She has acted for a number of women in appeals against convictions for the murder of their violent partners, most recently Sally Challen (relying on new evidence of coercive and controlling behaviour) and Fariessia Martin. She has also acted for a number of women who were deceived into relationships with undercover police officers in civil proceedings, judicial review and at a public inquiry.



JO UNDERWOOD

Shelter

Jo Underwood is a housing and public law solicitor at Shelter, a housing and homelessness charity, where she leads the strategic litigation team. Jo has acted for Shelter on interventions in a number of high-profile housing and social welfare cases, including Supreme Court challenges relating to homelessness, the benefit cap and out of area temporary housing placements. Jo also carries out training, policy and research activities at Shelter in relation to homelessness and poor housing.

Prior to joining Shelter, Jo worked in a law centre and a high street legal aid practice in inner city London. She is on the steering group for one of the first communities in the UK to house and resettle a refugee family under the Community Sponsorship scheme. She is also on the advisory board for a community café and support service assisting women fleeing domestic abuse.



ZIA NABI

Doughty Street Chambers

Zia is the joint head of the Housing and Social Welfare Team. He is a very experienced public and civil lawyer specialising in judicial review, statutory appeals, community care, children and the Court of Protection. Issues of fairness and access to justice are at the heart of his work. Most of his cases are concerned with the rights and interests of the most vulnerable and marginalised members of society.



MARTIN WESTGATE KC

Doughty Street Chambers

Martin Westgate has a consistent track record of advice and representation in a wide range of subject areas although he concentrates on public and administrative law, housing and social care. Much of his work is in, and on appeal from, the Administrative Court and he is experienced in professional negligence and costs litigation, particularly in cases related to his main practice areas. His broad based practice makes him an ideal choice for cases that have a multidisciplinary aspect or that are difficult to categorise.



IZZY MULHOLLAND

Public Interest Law Centre

She is working with Solace Women's Aid on a project to defend and enforce the rights of those escaping sexual and domestic abuse. The research and casework conducted through this project is aimed at developing strategic litigation to enable survivors to access temporary and permanent housing.

Izzy was previously a homelessness advocate worker at a London winter night shelter. She also worked as a housing advisor at a drop-in centre for homeless people in North London where she provided legal casework on housing issues, welfare benefits and healthcare.



ZIMRAN SAMUEL MBE

Doughty Street Chambers

Zimran Samuel MBE is an experienced human rights practitioner with a wide ranging practice based around children law, mental health law and international law. He is regularly instructed in significant cases involving vulnerable adults and medical treatment decisions brought under the inherent jurisdiction of the High Court and in the Court of Protection.



SASKIA HAGELBERG

Independent Sexual Violence Advocate, Solace Women's Aid

Saskia Hagelberg is an accredited Independent Sexual Violence Advocate. In her current role at Solace Women's Aid, she manages a project that provides practical and emotional support to survivors of domestic abuse and sexual violence, with a particular emphasis on LGBTQ+ survivors. Saskia provides direct support, manages a team of advocates, and provides training and information to professionals in the NHS, social care, and other statutory and voluntary services, on issues relating to domestic and sexual violence.

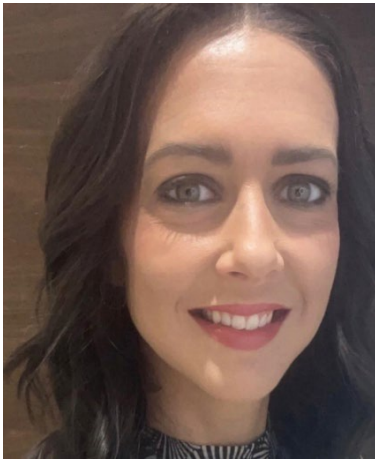
Previously, Saskia worked at a homelessness charity in South London, supporting vulnerable adults with issues concerning housing, mental and physical health, and substance misuse. She is a proud advocate for sex worker rights, having worked with the English Collective of Prostitutes (ECP), the Sex Worker Advocacy and Resistance Movement (SWARM) and most recently the European Sex Worker Rights Alliance (ESWA). Here she supported campaigns for the decriminalisation of sex work, provided benefits advice to sex

workers during the pandemic, and designed and delivered training for therapists, to make their services more inclusive to sex workers. In 2020-21, she co-authored a toolkit and spoke with universities, as part of a working group designed to raise awareness of sex work at higher education institutions.

She has a first class degree in International Relations from the University of Leicester, and completed an MSc in Human Rights at LSE.

LAURA TOMSA

Children's Services Manager, Barnardo's Cymru and the South West



Laura worked for Barnardo's for 10 years and have managed a range of services stretching from prevention support to edge of care.

Her current role consists of managing sexual and criminal exploitation services and she also the strategic lead for domestic abuse across the region. She is passionate about supporting families impacted by domestic abuse and have managed a pioneering whole family approach to domestic abuse service that was successfully evaluated by the IPC, Oxford Brookes University.

SHU SHIN LUH

Doughty Street Chambers



Shu Shin practices in all areas of public law. Her practice has a strong human rights, civil liberties, and anti-discrimination focus. Her expertise covers a broad range of subject matters including community care, mental health and mental capacity, health care, education, housing, welfare benefits, human trafficking, immigration and asylum, and deprivation of liberty both in the context of immigration detention and the Court of Protection. She pursues significant public interest litigation on behalf of individuals and organisations.



ALICE IRVING

Doughty Street Chambers

Alice Irving is a civil and public law practitioner, specialising in housing and social welfare, community care and education. Alice receives instructions across all areas of housing law. She has represented vulnerable clients in resisting possession claims, anti-social behaviour injunctions and closure orders. She has experience advising on and litigating disrepair claims, and challenging homelessness decisions. Alice has also provided advice to disabled clients in relation to Disabled Facilities Grants and other avenues for obtaining suitable accommodation. She has particular experience working with clients assessed as lacking capacity to litigate.



JAMIE BURTON KC

Doughty Street Chambers

Head of Chamber's Community Care and Health Team, Jamie is a leading authority on health and social care, homelessness, social security and the rights of disabled people, children and migrants. He is an expert in judicial review and regularly appears in the higher courts, including the Supreme Court. Jamie's civil practice encompasses high value claims in tort and contract, including group claims/class actions. He acts for public authorities and private parties. He is particularly well known for bringing civil claims against the police on behalf of victims of crime.



DOMINIC PRESTON

Doughty Street Chambers

Dominic Preston is a public law lawyer specialising in housing, community care and Court of Protection work. His housing practice is centred on homelessness, allocations and disputes concerning residential premises and necessarily strays into immigration law, community care and child care law, EU law, discrimination law, and human rights. His Court of Protection work specialises in the cross-over between mental capacity and housing, with a particular expertise in hoarder cases and the related deprivation of liberty issues that arise. His community care work centres on obtaining accommodation and assistance under the Care Act 2014.



SUE JAMES

Legal Action Group

Sue James is the chief executive of Legal Action Group. Prior to this she was director and solicitor at Hammersmith Law Centre where she specialized in housing law. She is an experienced court duty advocate, delivering advice and running two housing possession duty schemes in West London. In 2017 she won the Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year Outstanding Achievement Award. She is the Chair of the Renters Reform Coalition and co-author of *Housing Possession Duty Desk – a Practical Guide*, co-editor of the *Legal Aid Handbook* and *Justice Matters* and writes, speaks and campaigns on access to justice, housing and legal aid.



DANIEL CLARKE

Doughty Street Chambers

Daniel has a wide range of experience across private law, public law and human rights work. His main areas of practice are housing, social welfare and community care, with a particular focus on discrimination, public law and human rights issues. He also undertakes work in civil actions against the police and other public authorities, and in media law. He is regularly instructed to represent clients in claims for judicial review in the High Court, as well as parties and interveners in a range of other proceedings from the County Court to the Supreme Court.



MARIE PARIS

Doughty Street Chambers

Marie is a specialist housing and social welfare barrister. She accepts instructions in housing, homelessness, community care, and related public law matters. She has extensive experience of litigating housing matters in the county court, having joined chambers after spending two years as a duty adviser at South West London Law Centre.