

PRESS RELEASE - IMMEDIATE RELEASE

24 February 2021

## **LAPG's 2021 Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year awards are now open.**

**Nominations close on 19 April; new award category for this year: Disability Rights.**

Winners of the 12 awards will be announced on 6 July at a virtual ceremony to be broadcast online.

The 2021 Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year (LALY) awards have been launched by the Legal Aid Practitioners Group, with awards in 12 categories to be won (see full list, below).

### **LAPG CEO Chris Minnoch says:**

*'The pandemic has had a devastating impact on the people and communities that legal aid lawyers serve. The last year has taken a terrible toll on practitioners and their hard-working colleagues. Every one of them has faced unprecedented challenges - emotionally, practically, and financially. And there is no immediate end in sight. If ever there is a time to acknowledge and celebrate the vital work of those on the social justice frontline, it is this year. I have never been more proud to be part of the legal aid community - nor more angry at the lack of recognition and respect they receive from this and previous governments. LAPG is working to change that on many fronts - and I would urge politicians of all stripes to tune into the LALY21 ceremony on 6 July to hear the true story of legal aid, and of the unsung heroes of access to justice, whose work changes lives on a daily basis.'*

The 2021 LALY awards were officially launched at LAPG's first ever virtual annual conference, at an event hosted by legal affairs journalist and LALY founder Fiona Bawdon, and shadow justice secretary David Lammy MP.

**Speaking at the live event, which he attended by Zoom, David Lammy said of the importance of legal aid:**

*'The ability to access justice, regardless of class, creed, background, income, is the bedrock of a fair and just society.'*

What the LALY launch film here: <https://youtu.be/VtJGUMMKqes>

The winners of the 12 awards will be announced at a virtual ceremony, which will be broadcast live on 6 July, following the success of last year's 'lockdown LALYs'.

All LALY nominations must be submitted online via: [www.lapg.co.uk/laly-nomination](http://www.lapg.co.uk/laly-nomination)

LALY21 award categories and sponsors:

1. Legal Aid Newcomer – CILEx
2. Legal Aid Team – Accesspoint
3. Disability Rights – Bidwell Henderson
4. Family Legal Aid – Resolution
5. Criminal Defence – Doughty Street Chambers
6. Legal Aid Barrister – The Bar Council
7. Legal Aid Firm/Not-for-profit Agency – The Law Society
8. Housing Law – One Pump Court
9. Regional Legal Aid Firm/Not-for-Profit Agency –The Legal Education Foundation
10. Social Welfare – Garden Court Chambers
11. Public Law – DG Legal
12. Outstanding Achievement – Matrix Law

Media partner - Legal Action Group

General sponsors – TV Edwards Solicitors; Anthony Gold Solicitors

The LALY awards are non-profit-making, and only made possible thanks to our sponsors.

Follow the LALYs on Twitter

@LALYawards

#LALY21

[www.facebook.com/legalaidpractitionersgroup](http://www.facebook.com/legalaidpractitionersgroup)

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## NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. LAPG is the leading membership organisation for legal aid lawyers, providing a wide range of services and support. [www.lapg.co.uk](http://www.lapg.co.uk)
2. The Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year awards are into their 19th year. They are organised on a not-for-profit basis by LAPG, and are the only awards aimed solely at lawyers doing publicly-funded work. Nominations close on 19 April, and the winners will be announced on 6 July 2021.
3. We do not seek nominations for the Outstanding Achievement award.