

PLANT THE SEED OF **JUSTICE** IN YOUR WILL

A Legacy Gift helps **LawWorks** grow the roots of pro bono, so legal support reaches those who need it most.



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A Reflection from our former Chair, Alasdair Douglas

I enjoyed a successful career as a solicitor for thirty-five years. I took a great deal of satisfaction from doing challenging work in the company of interesting clients and colleagues. It also brought me financial reward.

Since retiring from the law, I have tried to give a little back to society through chairing the Board of Trustees of LawWorks, standing down in 2025. This has been an enormous privilege. I will continue to support LawWorks financially in the vital work they do for those individuals and not for profit organisations who cannot afford legal advice and, without LawWorks' pro bono programmes, would not have access to justice. I believe that it is critical if we are to be a society that upholds the rule of law that justice is available to all. When I hand in my last timesheet, I will be leaving a legacy to LawWorks to help them continue with their important work and would encourage lawyers and others to do the same.

Alasdair Douglas.



A Word From Our CEO...

Thank You For Considering Leaving A Gift To LawWorks In Your Will.

Leaving a gift to LawWorks in your Will is like planting a seed, a seed of justice. With our care, that seed will grow, rooting your legacy in access to justice and giving those in need a place to find essential support.

Since 1997, LawWorks has been cultivating a community of volunteer lawyers, projects and clinics dedicated to one purpose: access to justice. Each year, tens of thousands of people turn to us with multiple and complex legal issues. Unpaid wages can quickly lead to rent arrears, eviction and family difficulties. This domino effect is sadly common, and the demand for our services continues to grow.

To meet that need, we run specialist projects and work with dedicated volunteer solicitors who are ready to step in. Pro bono support can mean recovering wages, preventing an unlawful eviction or supporting a community group. Each act of support is like watering the roots of justice, strengthening individuals and communities and allowing new networks of support to take hold.

By planting the seed of justice in your Will, you help ensure this work continues to grow.

At LawWorks, we will look after your legacy, nurturing it so that volunteers can share their skills and compassion and so that access to justice is there not only for those who need it today but for generations to come.

Thank you,



Rebecca Wilkinson
Chief Executive



Who are LawWorks?

Founded in 1997 by a group of solicitors who wanted to coordinate their pro bono efforts, LawWorks has evolved over the last two decades to become a national pro bono charity supporting the most vulnerable communities across England and Wales.

Our range of projects allows us to connect small charities and not-for-profit organisations who need legal support but cannot afford to pay for it, with volunteer solicitors, legal professionals, and law students who want to give their time for free.

What do we do?

LawWorks is a charity committed to enabling access to justice through free legal advice.

Facilitate and support pro bono legal services and access to justice for people in need and without the ability to pay

Promote, facilitate and develop pro bono activities across the solicitors' profession and at law schools in England and Wales

Removing barriers to pro bono

Connect smaller charities and not-for-profit organisations with pro bono legal services -enabling them to deliver their mission

Add our voice to policy change to help enable access to justice for all



Who do we help?

LawWorks services are available to people who cannot afford legal support and are not able to access legal aid. Since the 2013 cuts to legal aid on social welfare matters, many have been unable to receive free advice on issues such as employment, housing, family law and debt.

The impact has been most evident on low-income families who cannot pay for advice yet face legal matters that affect their livelihood, mental health and finances. Cases eligible for legal aid dropped from almost a million in 2009/10 to just 130,000 in 2021/22.

Although not an alternative to legal aid, our projects connect people in these situations with solicitors who volunteer their time, while also supporting advocacy for policy change in the access to justice sector.

We also support small not-for-profit organisations with their legal needs, facilitating free advice on GDPR, contracts, leases, employment law and more. This allows them to focus their resources on the beneficiaries who rely on their services.



Maria's Story

Maria is Italian and has been living and working in the UK for several years. For almost two years she was employed by a cleaning company who provide cleaning services for a large department store.

Initially Maria was asked to cover a holiday absence and was expected to work for 12 hours every day, six days a week for £7.50 per hour. Once this initial period was over, the hours dropped substantially and Maria found she was effectively on a zero hours contract despite having nothing in writing until much later. Maria would often have long periods without being

given any work, and several times she was provided with her shift rota for the week, only to arrive each day and told that she was no longer needed. The thirty pounds weekly travel pass that she had bought was never reimbursed, and the lack of regular income was causing big problems for Maria.

Sometimes when Maria worked it would be for a four hour shift in which she was expected to clean three floors of the large department store (including six bathrooms) either with one other person or on her own, resulting in her working over her hours without receiving overtime. This left Maria working at an

hourly rate well below minimum wage. Over a 12 month period, Maria was underpaid every month except one, she never received payment for time off sick nor any holiday pay. She was required to sign a rota book both when she arrived and when she left work, but the book disappeared and she was told that no record was kept of the hours she had logged over the previous weeks and months.

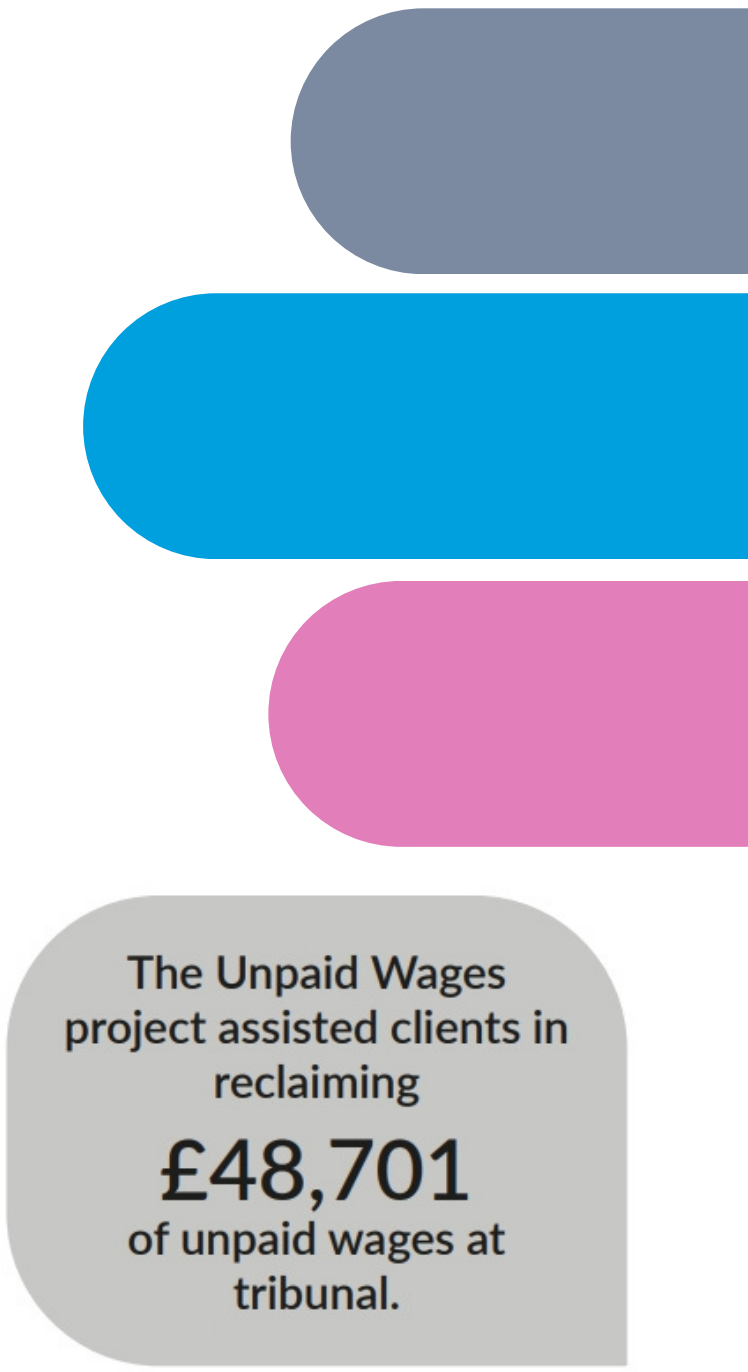
Maria does not speak fluent English and could not afford to pay for legal advice and she therefore struggled to assert her rights with her employer.

The company refused to acknowledge any of her grievances and even told her not to speak to a lawyer. Luckily she was referred to the LawWorks Unpaid Wages Clinic where a volunteer lawyer, who had been trained by LawWorks and also spoke fluent Italian, was able to pursue her claim for unpaid wages through the Employment Tribunal. The volunteer, supervised by the LawWorks in-house employment lawyer, was able to work with Maria to present her case against her employer. The employer decided to settle the case rather than face a hearing and Maria was awarded over £2,700, which was the total amount she had claimed.

Maria is very grateful for the support of LawWorks and says, “the lawyer worked extremely hard on my case and without him I would not have been able to recover any money or even have been able to leave my job”.

She remains very angry with the way she was treated by her former employer, and worries on behalf of her who are still working for the company and feel trapped by their circumstances. LawWorks has offered assistance to them via Maria and hopes this offer will be taken up.

**Names and places have been changed to protect client confidentiality*



**The Unpaid Wages
project assisted clients in
reclaiming**

£48,701
**of unpaid wages at
tribunal.**



How to write a Will

Writing a Will is something that we all put off, but having a valid Will in place allows your family and friends to know and honour your wishes after you're gone. We recommend you consult a solicitor or professional Will-writing service to make sure that all the legal formalities are covered and that your Will is valid.

To find a local solicitor, in England and Wales, you can search the directory of the Law Society (the independent professional body for solicitors): www.lawsociety.org.uk

As a LawWorks supporter you can use a free will writing service with Bequeathed/Remember A Charity.

You can also benefit from a 20% discount on will writing services with The Co-operative Legal Services. To contact a wills specialist, call on 0330 606 9578 and quote RACWILLS01 or go to their website.

Already have a Will?

It is good practice to review your Will every few years as your priorities can change as your circumstances do. If you want to make small changes to your Will this can be done by writing a Codicil – a separate legal document from your Will that can accommodate these changes if signed and dated by you and two witnesses. As above, we recommend speaking to a legal advisor before writing a Codicil. If you would like write a Codicil to include a gift to LawWorks, some suggested wording is as follows:

“I (name) of (address) declare this to be a Codicil dated (date) to amend my existing Will, dated (date of Will).

“I give all/percentage/share/sum/item to The Solicitors Pro Bono Group (known as LawWorks) charity number 1064274, at the address: LawWorks, DX 115, 50-52 Chancery Lane, London, WC2A 1HL, to be used for its general charitable purposes.”





Rachel's Story

"Without them I would have fallen apart in court because I was so emotional. I was a complete mess and just trying to be brave."

Rachel is a British woman who spent 12 years living in Greece, working as an English teacher. She had a long term relationship with a Greek man and together they had three children. The children's father lost his job, was never able to find alternative work and became dependent on alcohol. He started to abuse Rachel through his aggressive behaviour but she felt she had no alternative but to stay with him and carry on working full time, for the

sake of the children. However, one day, the father attacked Rachel violently in front of her children, leaving her bruised, bleeding and terrified, and she fled to safety with the children to a friend's house, on the advice of the police.

With her partner making violent threats despite a restraining order, and having no money as he had withdrawn all the funds from her account, Rachel took the difficult decision to return with the children to in England. However, after several months in the UK, Rachel found herself being arrested by the police for removing the children from

Greece without their father's consent. She was released on bail and, although she initially qualified for legal aid, this did not last. Rachel realised that she needed to understand her legal position quickly but she could not afford to pay for a lawyer.

At this stage Rachel was desperate but fortunately she found the Anglia Law School Law Clinic which had been recently established with support from LawWorks, where volunteer lawyers provide free family law advice. At the clinic, despite the fact that the odds were stacked heavily against her, Rachel was given the confidence to prepare and organise her defence against her former partner's claims. At the final hearing, the judge concluded that the children should not be returned to Greece, having been persuaded by the strength of Rachel's evidence.

Life is still difficult for Rachel and her children as they face challenges ahead. She remains extremely grateful to the volunteer lawyers and says,

"Without them I would have fallen apart in court because I was so emotional. I was a complete mess and just trying to be brave. But they

gave me the confidence to do it, suggested things I hadn't thought of and taught me how to organise the case. I will be eternally grateful to them for their help and dedication."

66,000+
people helped by clinics
on the LawWorks Clinics
Network in 2024.

FAQ's

1 When is the best time to make a Will?

The sooner the better! It is easier for writing a Will to fall down your to do list, but once you have one written you can have peace of mind that your family and friends are provided for and know your wishes.

2 I don't have much to give, is there any point making a Will?

Absolutely! No matter what you have, it is important that the people around you know what you want to do with it and where you want it to go.

3 What type of gift can I leave to LawWorks?

We would be delighted for any gift, no matter how big or small, that you may be able to leave us. Usually, your gift will fall into one of the following:

- A fixed sum of money
- A particular item or property such as antiques, or a piece of art.
- A "residuary legacy" – this is when you leave us the remainder of your estate, or a percentage of it, after you have taken care of your family, friends and any debts owed.

4 Do I need to tell you if I leave a gift to LawWorks?

No, you are under no obligation to tell us if you would like to leave us a gift although if you do we would love the opportunity to thank you personally and to share information about the work we are doing and our plans for the future that you gift could support. To let us know that you would like to leave us a gift, please contact fundraising@lawworks.org.uk. Any information you give us will be treated in confidence.

5 Can I change my mind?

Absolutely. A Will is a document that is personal to you, and we fully respect that circumstances and priorities change.

6 What affect does leaving a gift to you have on Inheritance Tax?

Inheritance Tax (IHT) is tax that is payable on your estate after you pass away. Leaving a gift to a charity can help to reduce this burden, but we would recommend that you speak to your legal advisor about this when you write your Will – any information given here is for guidance only.

Inheritance Tax may be charged on any part of your estate over the nil rate band threshold of £325,000. The current rate is 40%, and your executor will need to pay this before distributing the estate.

Leaving a gift of over 10% of your estate to a registered charity could reduce this from 40% to 36%, lessening the IHT burden. For more information, please speak to your legal advisor or visit the HMRC website.

Our Not-for-Profits
Programme found
pro bono support for

272
legal matters.

Our Promise to You...

Leaving a gift in your Will is a personal, kind and generous decision to make. We understand that it is a difficult thing to think about, but we promise that we will always respect your privacy and will keep anything you tell us confidential unless you direct us otherwise.

We know your loved ones come first. We will always treat yourself and your loved ones with compassion and respect.

We understand that things change. If your circumstances change or you change your mind, we respect your decision and will never put any pressure on you or your loved ones.

Lastly, we promise to use your gift carefully, solely towards our charitable aims, and in a way that continues our mission to promote access to justice to people who need it most.



Get In Touch...

If you want to talk to someone at LawWorks about leaving a gift in your Will, please email us at:

fundraising@lawworks.org.uk.

www.lawworks.org.uk/about-us/support-lawworks/remember-us-your-will

To ensure your gift reaches us, your solicitor or professional Will-writer will need these details:

THE SOLICITORS PRO BONO GROUP

ADDRESS

Lawworks DX 115, 89 Chancery Lane,
London, England, WC2A 1EU

CHARITY NUMBER

1064274

COMPANY NUMBER

3410932





LawWorks is a charity working in England and Wales to connect volunteer lawyers with people in need of legal advice, who are not eligible for legal aid and cannot afford to pay; and with the not-for-profit organisations that support them.

LawWorks.org.uk
info@lawworks.org.uk
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@LawWorks.bsky.social LawWorks

(the Solicitors Pro Bono Group)
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Registered charity number 1064274