The Not-for-Profits Programme

ABOUT LAWWORKS

LawWorks (the Solicitors Pro Bono Group) is a charity committed to enabling access to justice through free legal advice.

At LawWorks, we encourage, facilitate, support and celebrate the contribution of pro bono by solicitors, law students and the wider legal pro bono community across England and Wales. Pro bono is not an alternative to legal aid – but it makes an important contribution to accessing legal information, advice and representation.

LawWorks is a membership organisation, supporting volunteers from over 150 law firms and legal teams across England and Wales. Our members play an invaluable role in supporting our work in extending access to justice to those in need of legal advice through their membership fees and pro bono volunteering.

By providing this support, our members make a significant difference to individuals and local communities across England and Wales.

About the Programme

The Not-for-Profits Programme brokers legal advice to small non-profit organisations on a wide range of legal issues. The organisations we help vary enormously, but commonly deal with poverty, disability, abuse, social exclusion, and unemployment. Lawyers from our member organisations can volunteer on the Programme through:

- **Casework:** discrete, one-off pieces of legal advice ranging from reviewing a lease or drafting a contract, to updating a constitution or advising on rights in a dispute.
- **Honorary Counsel:** working with non-profits on a longer term basis to carry out health checks of documents, be an ongoing point of contact for initial advice and identify when further advice is needed.
- **Training:** providing free 'lunch and learn' training sessions covering important topics for non-profits, for example, data protection, employment rights, corporate law and other resources.

"It is nice to feel like you are helping a worthwhile organisation which otherwise would not have been able to afford to instruct you."

"The team [of volunteer solicitors] were professional, extremely diligent and we received world class support and advice, that would normally be well beyond our reach!"

"That was a fantastic support from you. We know how expensive legal advice is, and we were very happy with this support."

274

cases matched with volunteers in 2025.

How does it work?

1. LawWorks assesses applications for legal advice, checks they meet our eligibility criteria and gathers relevant background information and documents.
2. Opportunities are uploaded on to the UK Pro Bono Portal, with weekly Monday morning email reminders notifying the registered Portal users (typically a firm's pro bono co-ordinator) of the current opportunities available.
3. If any volunteer lawyers are interested in a matter, the Portal users can download a briefing sheet which contains details about the non-profit and its legal issue. The opportunity will have a deadline for expressing an interest (usually by Thursday at 12pm).
4. The Portal user can indicate a volunteer's interest in a matter by providing their name and email address via the Pro Bono Portal the deadline.
5. A member of the LawWorks team will contact the volunteer to confirm if they have been allocated the matter and provide the non-profit's contact details. The volunteer should then reach out to the non-profit within a couple of days.
6. LawWorks remains available to help, should any issues arise.

Who we help

- We help non-profit organisations only (CICs, CIOs, companies limited by guarantee, unincorporated associations) whose annual unrestricted income is less than £1 million.
- The non-profit must have a public or community benefit that it provides in England and Wales. We may look at the ultimate beneficiaries, particularly the extent to which vulnerable or disadvantaged individuals are supported.
- Area of law – this must be within the scope of what our volunteers can offer. It excludes immigration, housing, family, specialist charity matters, ongoing disputes/litigation, internal disputes, complaints about charities.

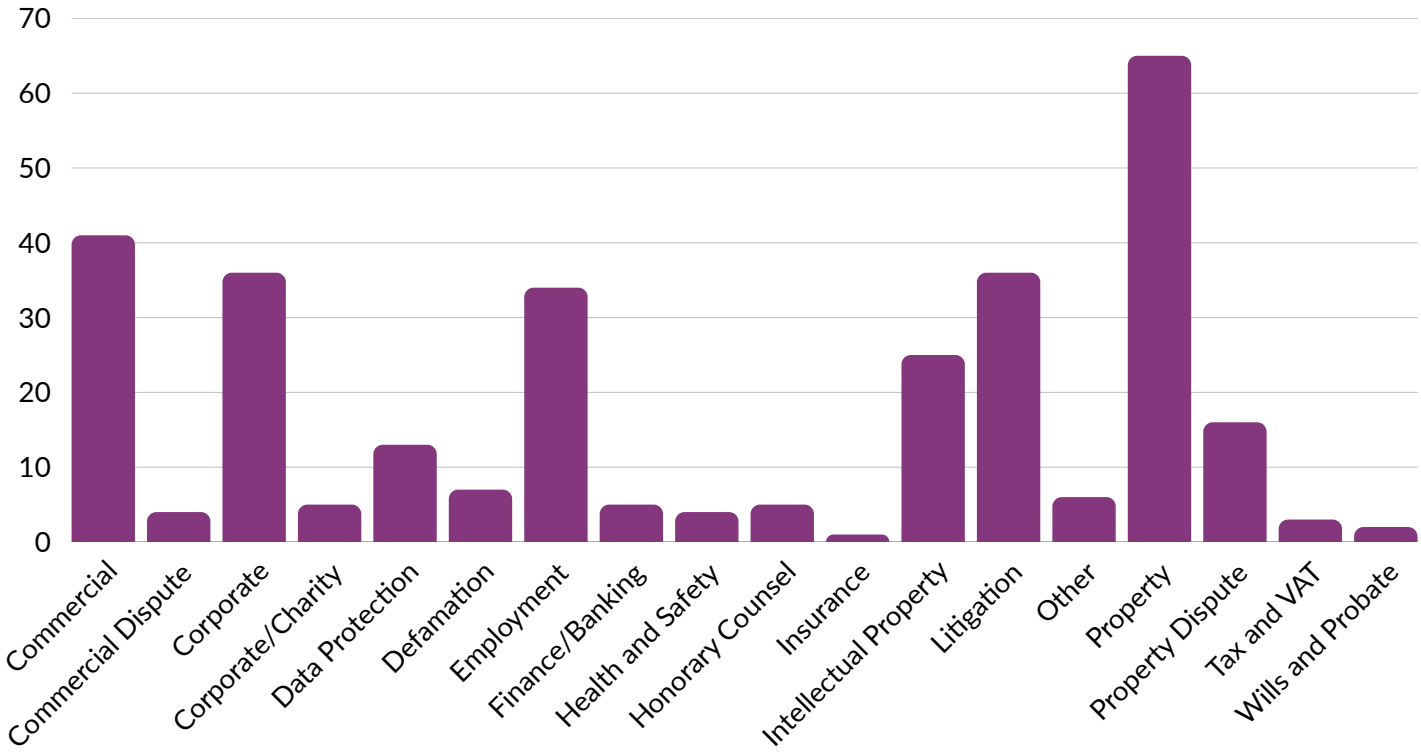
84%

of non-profits feel more confident dealing with future legal issues.

How we help you

- We do the groundwork, gathering background information and documents so you know exactly what help is required.
- Robust eligibility checks and application procedure to ensure that organisations are matched with volunteer lawyers with relevant experience.
- The LawWorks team remains on hand to assist with any issues that may arise.
- LawWorks continuously reviews experiences of the service to develop and improve it.
- We understand that lawyers' capacities constantly change and so volunteers can select cases as and when they have the capacity to do so.

Areas of Law:



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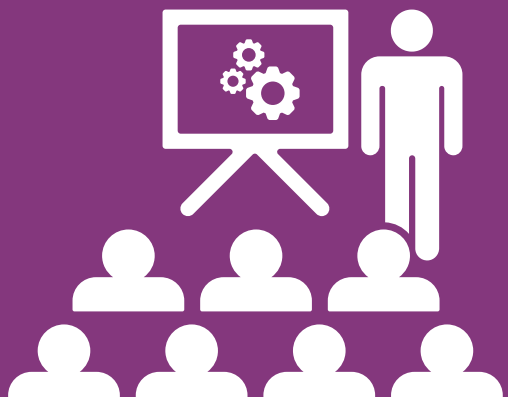

99%

of volunteers would volunteer again or recommend a colleague.

Case Story

Strengthening Support for Survivors of Modern Slavery: Anti-Slavery Initiative Oxford (ASIOX)

Founded by Sue Brockes-Smith, Anti-Slavery Initiative Oxford (ASIOX) became a registered charity in 2022, having already been providing vital support to people affected by modern slavery and exploitation across Oxfordshire and the wider Thames Valley.

What began as a small local action group in 2018 had grown into a trusted service, supporting individuals with complex and often traumatic experiences.

"Last year we supported about 70 individuals in a variety of ways, people who had experienced different forms of exploitation and modern slavery."

ASIOX works closely with survivors as they rebuild their lives, supporting people who have experienced labour exploitation, domestic servitude, and other forms of abuse.

Many are dealing with insecure housing, immigration concerns, and long-term trauma, often with little access to specialist advice.

As demand increased, so did the complexity of the organisation's work. Supporting people safely and effectively required strong systems, clear public information, and robust governance. ASIOX needed a professional website, clear terms and conditions, and policies that reflected both its values and legal responsibilities.

For a small charity, developing this legal and digital infrastructure felt overwhelming. Recognising the need for expert guidance, Sue and her team began searching for support, which led them to LawWorks. Through LawWorks' Not-for-Profits Programme, ASIOX was connected with volunteer lawyers from White & Case, who provided legal support at a crucial stage of the charity's development. LawWorks acted as the broker, bringing together the right expertise at the right time.

"It was such a gift to find that this kind of support was even available. It constantly surprises me that there are people and organisations out there who will help with this kind of thing."

With these foundations in place, ASIOX gained greater confidence in how it presented itself to survivors, partners, and funders. The strengthened governance framework has already made it easier for people to understand the charity's work, access support, and trust its services.

"Having the legal foundations in place gives us confidence as we develop our website. It means when people do find us, they'll know they can trust what they're seeing and who we are."

Looking ahead, the strengthened infrastructure is opening new opportunities for ASIOX to build partnerships, secure funding, and reach more survivors. What began as a grassroots initiative has become a trusted organisation with the systems needed to grow responsibly, ensuring more survivors can access the support they need.

"We can actually plan how to grow and help more people. We're so grateful for the support we've had through LawWorks. It's been a real encouragement to know that we're not doing this alone."

105 cases placed by end of April 2026.

Impact

By volunteering through the Programme, you contribute to its impact:

- Supporting the continuation and expansion of the non-profit's services to people in need.
- Increasing the non-profit's confidence to deal with legal issues.
- Improving future governance of the non-profit.
- Helping non-profit organisations to become more self-sufficient and able to identify potential legal issues in the future.

To join LawWorks or find out more about visit our website: www.lawworks.org.uk/solicitors-and-volunteers or email membership@lawworks.org.uk.

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
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