

WARWICK LAW IN THE COMMUNITY

END OF YEAR REPORT
2021/22



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About Warwick Law in the Community

Warwick Law in the Community (LinC) launched in September 2019. We strive to make a meaningful contribution to our community locally, nationally and internationally through innovative clinical education and research. We work collaboratively with various organisations to create opportunities for undergraduate and postgraduate law students to gain practical experience in law and actively contribute to advancing social justice. We offer opportunities in more traditional forms of legal advice and practice, but we also look beyond these to expose students to alternative ways of doing and thinking about law, including writing, research, community organising and public legal education.

We aim to develop and produce engaged and impactful research on social justice, explore how research can support community-led efforts through critical and participatory methods, and foster collaboration between academics, legal practitioners and activists. We seek to develop mutually beneficial long-term relationships and collaborative projects with organisations that share our values.

Warwick LinC currently offers voluntary and paid opportunities for Warwick Law School students across four main initiatives:

Immigration and Asylum Clinic

For over 11 years students from the Law School have been supporting the Immigration and Asylum Clinic at the Central England Law Centre (CELC).

Based on a traditional clinic model, students support frontline advice services under the guidance of Rob Bircumshaw, Head of Immigration and Asylum and his team at CELC.

Strategic Public Law Clinic (SPLC)

The Strategic Public Law Clinic is a joint initiative between Central England Law Centre and Warwick LinC. It specialises in using public law strategically, focussing on a rights-based approach, to address systematic disadvantage.

Working in small groups, student volunteers receive supervision, guidance and mentorship from Karen Ashton (Solicitor and CELC's Public Law Strategic Development Lead) and Dr Tara Mulqueen (Director of Warwick LinC).

Our projects are carefully selected to put legal learning into practice, find creative ways of using the law and develop leadership, communication and organisational skills in the social justice sector. Student volunteers are closely involved in devising and delivering project strategies, and not simply completing set tasks.

Public Legal Education Module

This module aims to introduce students to the ideas and practice of public legal education through an experiential programme, while also providing support to our local community.

Public legal education (PLE) addresses legal need arising from lack of awareness of the legal system and reduced access to sources of assistance at a community level, rather than through case specific or individual legal advice. Working with community organisations and under close supervision, students use their legal knowledge and research skills in creative ways to design and deliver PLE that addresses defined needs.

LinC Summer Internships

LinC offers part-time, paid summer internships in partnership with the Central England Law Centre and other local external partner organisations.

Internships offer our students the opportunity to gain vital practical experience of in-depth project work which is crucial to their personal development and their career aspirations.

Achievements and Highlights 2021/22

2021/22 has been a very positive year for Warwick Law in the Community (LinC). The first half of the year was still very much affected by the ongoing impact of Covid-19 due to the necessity to limit in-person interactions in our clinics. Despite this, we managed to achieve a huge amount and provide our students with excellent opportunities. It was wonderful to see our students return to in-person client facing work and clinic sessions in the second half of the year.

Our Immigration and Asylum clinic has focussed this year on supporting Exceptional Case Funding applications for legal aid. Twelve students worked on the clinic, assisting with these applications and completing research tasks related to specific cases. We are delighted that with an increase in future funding from the Law School, we are able to look forward to increasing the number of students able to participate in the I&A clinic next academic year and reopening a drop-in clinic.

Our Strategic Public Law Clinic (SPLC) has worked across three substantial new projects this year on issues related to homelessness, social care and poverty. The clinic has also continued to make use of the work of a number of previous years' projects and see real impact from this work. From 2022/23 the SPLC will be renamed the Strategic Social Justice Clinic.

Our Public Legal Education Module students have worked with a range of organisations on four different projects related to housing-rights, precarious employment, carers' rights and healthcare in immigration removal centres.

This year LinC has led a project on school exclusions. Working alongside Warwickshire County Council, LinC students have drawn on best practice in public legal education to create a film which explains the exclusions process and helps families understand their rights and options. We look forward to launching the film next academic year.

During 2021/22, we have significantly developed the research activities of LinC through two projects: The 'Reclaiming Access to Justice' Series, a collaborative forum between LinC and the Law Centres Network, and the Nuffield Foundation funded study 'Understanding Local Legal Need and Supporting Early Intervention through Public Legal Education.'

Facts and Figures

Warwick LinC has continued to offer a substantial number of student opportunities in 2021/22. We received a total of **184** applications for opportunities throughout the year. We interviewed **135** students and provided a total of **81** student opportunities.

LinC Volunteering and Internship Opportunities October 2019-August 2022

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
SPLC	29	52	36
I&A	15	12	15
PLE Module	15	19	12
Summer Internships	2	9	5
School Exclusions Project	n/a	n/a	13
Total	61	92	81

Breakdown of LinC Volunteering and Internship Participation by Year Group 2021/22

	2021/22
First Year Undergraduate	23
Intermediate Year Undergraduate	28
Final Year Undergraduate	28
Postgraduate	2
Total	81

Immigration and Asylum Clinic

In 2021/22 the clinic continued to focus on supporting Exceptional Case Funding (ECF) applications for legal aid. This concerns cases in which a client's human rights under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) would be breached if they do not get funding for legal advice and representation. We aim to run the ECF clinic in a way which helps the students get a better understanding of legal aid, drafting and researching relevant legal provisions.

This year we had 12 students working with us on the clinic, which significantly increased the Law Centre's capacity to support ECF clients. With the help of our student volunteers we managed to complete 28 ECF applications as well as many substantive applications following the grant of legal aid. At the beginning of the year, we were still working remotely due to Covid-19 restrictions but as we moved into the second term, we were able to undertake some work in the office. Some students were able to assist with substantive applications once legal aid had been granted.

In addition to supporting ECF applications, the students also volunteered for research tasks in respect of particular cases, and some were able to help prepare for and attend appeal hearings.

We provided training sessions and support to the students on Microsoft Teams and in person during the second semester. Training topics included Article 8 applications and family reunion, tailored to the needs of ECF clients. Some students even helped us prepare an external training session on immigration bail.

The team were also fortunate to have an intern working with us during the summer. We tried to identify some of the issues that were facing asylum seekers by interviewing the residents in one of the hotels in Warwickshire and assisted some people with their asylum support needs and other legal support.

Case Study 1

Mr E was referred to the Law Centre by a local Citizen's Advice office. Mrs E entered the United Kingdom as a business systems analyst on a specialist worker visa after which Mr E and their four children joined her as dependents. Mrs E tragically died of cancer in November 2021.

Mr E needed assistance with trying to regularise his visa and that of his daughters. This was a difficult case because they did not fit into any obvious immigration route, but the children were well integrated in the United Kingdom and their mother is buried here. Because of the donations provided to the family after his wife's death Mr E was unable to secure legal aid. Nevertheless, we continued to work on the case and with the help of our students were able to get fee waivers for most of the family, saving them thousands of pounds in Home Office fees, before making the substantive application. This was painstaking work going through all bank transactions over the last 6 months to explain to the Home Office the nature of each transaction. Students then assisted us with completing the main application, which to date, is outstanding.

Case Study 2

H is a returning client with multiple health problems. She needed to extend her visa and could not afford a private solicitor. Our students prepared the ECF application, and she was granted legal aid. We then applied for a fee waiver with the help of the students and completed the substantive application. H was then granted an extension of leave.

Strategic Public Law Clinic

Central England Law Centre's new *Rights in the Community* initiative has started to identify many systemic social justice issues where a rights-based approach could contribute to progressive change. We developed three pieces of work this year to tackle issues relating to homelessness, social care and poverty. These are explained in more detail below. In addition, we have continued to make use of the work of a number of previous years' projects:

- The final report on healthcare in immigration removal centres was submitted as evidence to the public inquiry into abuse at one such centre, Brook House, and it continues to be used by our partner, the Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group, in their efforts to secure reforms which will deliver better quality health care for those who are detained.
- We are also working with the National Association of Welfare Rights Advisers to achieve implementation of the recommended reforms from our Addressing Systemic Issues in Universal Credit project, which would reduce the risk of people who are unfit to work not receiving their full benefit entitlements because the administrative system has not worked as it should.
- The Law Centre's Public Law Team has, with the help of a student intern, continued the work started by the Clinic to raise community awareness of their rights to lawful decision making by public authorities through our Public Awareness of Judicial Review project.

Tackling Poverty to Achieve Food Justice

Access to adequate food is a basic human necessity. The International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights recognises it as not only a necessity but as a human right. In its 6th periodic review in 2016, the UN Committee that monitors compliance with the Covenant raised concerns about the level of food insecurity in the UK and the state's reliance on food banks.

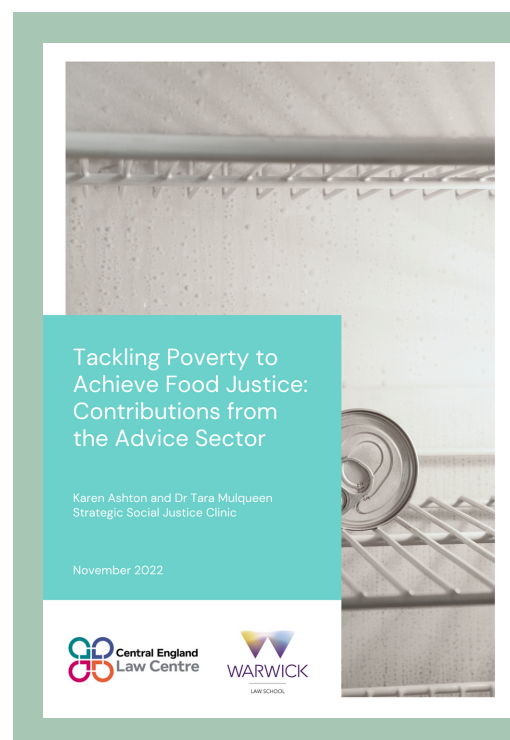
A 3-year research project, *The State of Hunger*, reporting in 2021, concluded that "food bank use is driven by economic need - that is, not having enough money to buy food once essential bills have been paid." [1] The question we wanted to explore here is the extent to which the provision of welfare rights and debt advice and information can alleviate the need for food bank use by helping those who are struggling to buy food to access and manage the state resources available to them. This has potentially significant implications for central and local government strategies for tackling household food insecurity.

Three well-established local voluntary sector advice agencies in Birmingham made two experienced advisers available for interview. The students involved in the project developed an 'open question' interview schedule and, after practicing a trial interview with one of the Law Centre's welfare rights advisers, undertook recorded interviews of the participating advisers. These were transcribed and subjected to a broad-brush analysis to develop an initial understanding of the emerging themes.

At the end of term, the work was continued by a student intern who worked with the supervising solicitor at the Law Centre on a more detailed and structured thematic analysis and the drafting of the project report which sets out a number of recommendations for national and local food strategies. At a national level, the evidence from our work with experienced advisers suggests that, to be effective, this response needs to do more than support the development of better quality jobs. The Government needs to ensure:

- Provision by the welfare benefit system of an adequate regular income to meet essential needs, including buying adequate food after other essential bills have been paid. This will require not only an increase to basic benefit rates but also reforms to ensure that the system cannot operate to reduce those payments, for example by direct deduction for debt repayments, to a level where a household can no longer afford to buy adequate food.
- Sufficient operational competencies and capacity in the welfare benefits system to minimise delays in payment of entitlements in a context where delays mean an inability to meet an essential need such as buying adequate food;
- Everyone experiencing household food insecurity has access to good quality and effective advice and information so that they: 1) secure their full income entitlements; 2) use their rights to manage their debts so that income is freed up to buy food; and 3) where required, are supported in their money management skills.
- The availability of a permanent and sufficiently resourced statutory scheme which supplements welfare benefits income entitlements, the purpose of which is to make funds available to low income households who experience one-off emergencies.

[1] Sosenko et al, *The State of Hunger 2021: Building the evidence on poverty, destitution, and food insecurity in the UK*, p13. This was a three-year research project commissioned by the Trussell Trust and undertaken by the Institute for Social Policy, Housing, Equalities Research (I-SPHERE) at Heriot Watt University.
[State-of-Hunger-2021-Report-Final.pdf \(trusselltrust.org\)](#)



At a local level, local authorities need to develop a strategic response to household food insecurity that is more consistent with Covenant obligations and that aspires to minimise the use of food banks, even though they may be working within by current welfare benefits frameworks over which they have no direct control. Our work suggests that this response should incorporate two key elements. Having consulted with all interested parties, including the local advice and information sector, a local food strategy should:

- Expressly recognise the role of good quality and effective advice and information in tackling household food insecurity, and commit to action plans which prioritise remedying any inadequacies in its local provision. By advice and information we mean specialist legal advice and representation, general advice and information, and assistance to navigate relevant resources effectively.
- Review how relevant financial resources within its control, including Local Welfare Assistance, will be used to tackle household food insecurity in its locality.

A summary of our findings and recommendations has been provided to Just Fair, an NGO which champions economic, social and cultural rights. Just Fair has been commissioned by the Equality and Human Rights Commission to prepare an independent parallel report to submit to the UN Committee in its 7th periodic review of the UK which is currently underway.

Rights in peril: Reinstating rights to social care post Covid-19

The Coronavirus Act 2020 removed a swathe of key rights of those in need of adult social care. The Care Act 2014 imposes an absolute obligation on local social services authorities to meet the statutory eligible needs of adults with disabilities. This right was transformed by the pandemic legislation into acts to be performed unless and until the authority decided it would adopt, what were known as 'stage 4 easements'. The lower levels of easements permitted only a streamlining of processes such as those used for assessment and review. The idea was that easements would allow local authorities to limit their obligations so that they would be better able to deal with the pandemic pressures. Four of the eight authorities across England which decided to adopt easements were in the West Midlands. Only one of those four adopted easements at the highest level which permitted a local authority not to meet eligible needs. None of the authorities retained formal easements for more than a few weeks in the early stages of the pandemic, but it appeared that a number of local authorities in effect used easements informally with resulting unmet need.

The aim of this Clinic project was to contribute to a grant-funded piece of work (Rights in Peril) being undertaken by the Law Centre into the impact on key rights which would inform the direction of public legal education and casework. Some of the students worked in small groups developing surveys to send to organisations that provide care and support services to find out the extent to which they were able to continue to do so during the pandemic and, if not, whether alternatives were put in place to meet needs. Another group learnt about draft questions using the rights under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000 and submitted questions to the local authorities.

There was some variation in issues arising in the different local authority areas, but some key issues emerged:

- **Concerns about the quality of impact monitoring and recovery planning.** The responses to the FOIA questions suggested a pattern of significant weaknesses in monitoring and recovery planning. This would have provided vital information to inform Covid-recovery action plans and resourcing decisions. The concern is that impacts will be longer lasting as a result.
- **Evidence of failures to comply with the legal obligation to undertake reviews of those in receipt of Care Act care and support.** This is an important right. It is the process which identifies when care and support packages aren't working or where needs have changed requiring changes in the support provided. Reviews were more important than ever during this unprecedented period of upheaval and change.
- The information from the surveys, although based on a limited number of responses, suggested that although home care services seem to have managed to continue operating throughout the pandemic, **day care services were completely closed for many months.** Day care services meet a range of eligible needs including personal care required, often 5 days a week for those who use them. The evidence from this work suggests that replacement provision did not always meet need, often impacting on family carers.

A detailed report based on the project findings was provided to the Law Centre's Rights in Peril project team. The Law Centre is now undertaking pieces of public legal education work with a number of organisations, including those who support carers, to help them identify where rights are not being fulfilled. It is hoped this will contribute to combating what could become a systemic erosion of rights.

The impact of the Local Housing Allowance on 'intentionally' homeless families

Local housing authorities owe a number of duties to homeless people, including to provide suitable accommodation if the eligibility criteria are met. 'Suitability' includes affordability, space and quality. However, if a family is found to be what is called 'intentionally' homeless, the housing authority's duty is limited to providing temporary accommodation for a reasonable period to allow the family an opportunity to find their own accommodation. Often, the only potential option available is private sector renting. But this can be made very difficult by the Local Housing Allowance (LHA). The LHA is a statutory limit on the amount of rent which will be paid by means-tested benefits when renting from a private landlord. The amount allowed will vary with the size of accommodation the scheme says the household needs up to a maximum size allowance of 4 bedrooms. If a family found 'intentionally' homeless is unable to put a roof over the heads of their children, the local social services authority will often provide accommodation but usually, again, on a temporary basis only. The family continues to remain under pressure to resolve their own homelessness.

The aim of the project was to explore the impact of the LHA scheme locally in Coventry and make the findings available to relevant Law Centre staff for the purpose of both casework and rights-based policy influencing.

The participating students were provided with training in the relevant legal frameworks by the Head of the Law Centre's Housing Team. They worked in small groups on three main sources of evidence: research and reports from academics and NGOs, local strategies developed by the Council and monitoring of the rent levels in the private sector using properties advertised on Rightmove.

Coventry City Council was found to have two key policy documents: a Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2019 to 2024 and a Tenancy Strategy 2013-2018 (the most recent such strategy appearing on its website). The first set out the Council's vision that: "Coventry Citizens will be able to access a suitable, affordable and decent home, with the support they need to sustain their housing" [Introduction, [Coventry Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2019](#)].

The second acknowledged local experience of the nationally recognised and increasing dependence on the private rented sector to meet local housing need.

Having developed a monitoring scheme, the project team monitored the availability in Coventry's private rented market of properties within the LHA in February 2022. The team found no 2- or 3-bedroom properties and only three 4-bedroomed properties with rents within the relevant LHA limits.

Existing research was found to demonstrate clear links between the LHA and debt, overcrowding and low quality. Homeless families who are reliant on means tested benefits and are found not to be owed a housing duty by a local authority, with all its attendant 'suitability' protections, will be at significant risk of a choice between rooflessness and unaffordable accommodation (driving them further into poverty); accommodation without the space the household requires (leading to over-occupation); and/or accommodation in a poor state of disrepair (potentially compromising safety, health and wellbeing).

In response to the difficulties the LHA presents, the Council's Housing Department has developed a partnership scheme with local landlords who agree to participate. Their properties will be available for a minimum of one year at the LHA rate to Housing Department nominees in return for the scheme incentives. The project work is being used by the Law Centre to explore the use of a rights-based approach to ensure that families who are found intentionally homeless have the opportunity to access the scheme.

Public Legal Education Module

During the 2021/22 academic year, 12 students on our public legal education module worked across four different placements and projects.

Law for Life Placement

Students on this placement supported the delivery of Law for Life's housing-rights programme for organisations that work with BAME communities. This included research into the over representation of BAME people in the privately rented sector, substandard housing and issues around homelessness, and the impact of COVID. Students also researched the work of local organisations that support BAME communities and adapted training resources to reflect the specific needs and experiences of these communities.

Carers' Rights Film

(Grapevine Coventry and Warwickshire and Central England Law Centre)

Under the Care Act 2014, carers of adults with eligible needs are entitled to have their own needs assessed, in particular to ascertain whether they are 'willing and able' to continue to provide care, the impact of providing care on their own well-being, the outcomes they wish to achieve in their own day-to-day life and whether they want to participate in education, training or recreation. Additionally, consideration of the extent carers are 'willing and able' to provide care (or otherwise) to loved ones is key to lawful support planning for a disabled adults; yet this consideration is poorly understood and is frequently overlooked. However, awareness of these rights amongst carers is worryingly low. Organisations such as Grapevine and CELC often encounter carers who need support but do not know they are entitled to an assessment of their needs. In addition, it can be challenging for carers to acknowledge that they have needs or that they might wish not to have as much responsibility as they do, given the personal nature of the caring relationship.

In this project, we worked collaboratively with Grapevine and the RIPPLE Project at the Central England Law Centre toward the creation of a short film about carers' rights with the aim of improving public understanding of these rights.

Precarious Work Film

(Coventry Independent Advice Service)

People who are in casualised and precarious employment situations - for example with companies like Deliveroo or Uber - face a range of issues owing to the nature of this work and the low and often unpredictable income levels associated with it. These include understanding their employment status and any rights they may have, as well as knock on effects of changing income on their entitlement to universal credit and other means-tested benefits, and tax issues.

The aim of this project was to develop a better understanding of the problems facing this group and select one or two priority issues to try to address through the creation and dissemination of an information resource. Students worked toward the creation of an accessible and engaging film dealing with these issues.

The Right to Community Equivalent Healthcare - Podcast

(Central England Law Centre and Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group)

In 2019, the Strategic Public Law Clinic undertook a project with the Gatwick Detainees Welfare Group (GDWG) to explore the reasons for persistent concerns about the quality of healthcare in immigration removal centres. We approached the issue from the perspective of public law, producing a report focused on the principle of community equivalence - the standard of healthcare that people in detention are entitled to expect - and the role of the inspection process in ensuring this quality is achieved.

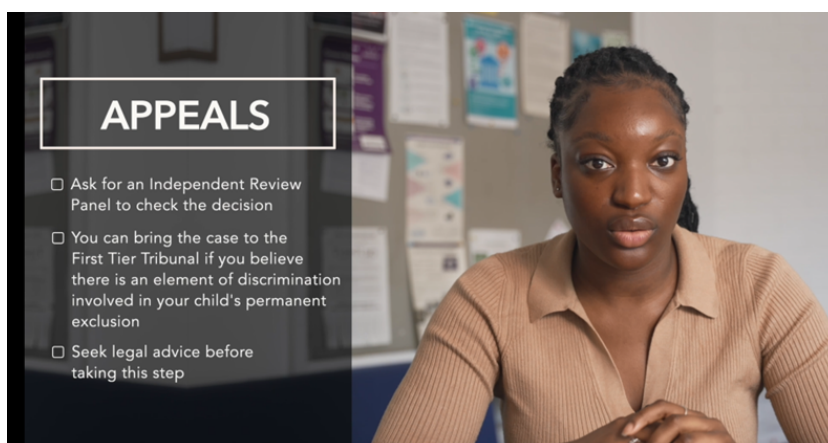
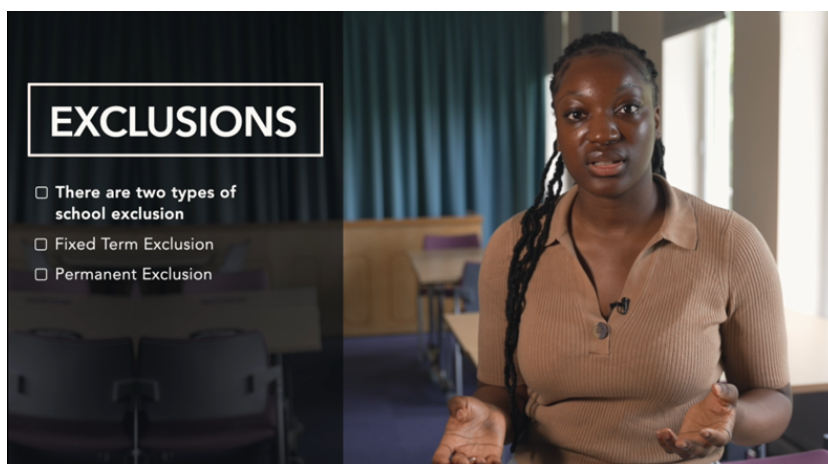
The aim of this project was to help disseminate the report to a wider audience through a podcast. Students devised more accessible ways of explaining key aspects of the report, conducted interviews with the authors of the report and GDWG, and contributed to producing the final podcast.

School Exclusions Film Project

In 2019, Warwick LinC was approached by Warwickshire County Council to explore the issues surrounding school exclusions, and what could be done to support families and pupils going through this process to better understand their rights and advocate for themselves.

Two of our student interns undertook research and shadowed a team at the Council to learn more about the issues. As part of this work, they observed how a significant gap in knowledge exists amongst parents and students within the school exclusions process. The aim of this project was to bridge this gap by creating a film that would help families and students to understand the process and what to expect, their rights and options, and the kinds of help that they can access.

Drawing on best practice in public legal education and working with experts including Warwickshire Parent Carer Voice Forum and solicitors at Bailey Wright & Co., students, a group of 12 students conducted research, drafted scripts and collaborated with a production company to create the film. 'School Exclusions: A helpful guide for parents, guardians and carers' is being launched in 2022/23 through a series of events.

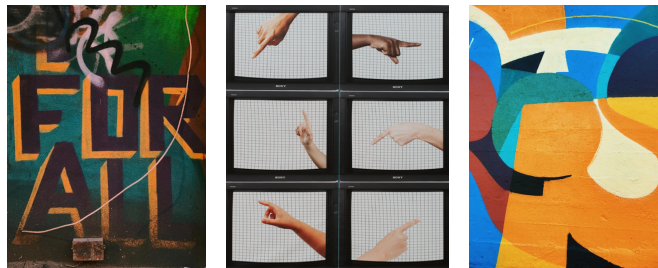


Research

This year we have focused on developing the research activities of Warwick Law in the Community through two projects.

Reclaiming Access to Justice Series

This collaborative forum between the Law Centres Network and Warwick Law in the Community, supported by the Enhancing Research Culture Fund, brought together academics and community legal practitioners to reflect critically on contemporary problems in accessing justice. The aim was to 'reclaim' the narrative around access to justice after years of austerity and create a space for critical reflection, creativity and collaboration between academics and community lawyers that can help us move the conversation in new directions. The events focused on three themes: 'Access to What', 'Beyond Digital Exclusion' and 'Community Lawyering and Movement Building.'



We convened a public event on each of these topics, which each event featuring 5-7 academic and practitioner speakers. The speakers were invited to give short 'provocations' on the topic and these were followed by discussion. In total, we featured 17 speakers from 15 different organisations including universities, law centres, third sector organisations and activist groups. The events were collectively attended by over 120 people, with two events taking place online and one in person at Warwick. We are looking forward to launching a podcast series drawing on the events in the next academic year.

Understanding Local Legal Need and Supporting Early Intervention through Public Legal Education



Legal needs have historically exceeded the capacity of traditional legal services. Cuts to publicly funded legal services and the shift to digital services have exacerbated this dynamic. The COVID-19 pandemic increased pressure to develop alternative ways for marginalised groups and communities to access justice. This coincided with the shift to early intervention and PLE (Public Legal Education) to curtail the number of litigants and prevent legal disputes escalating to crisis. Digital solutions have been proposed as a useful method for conducting PLE and other forms of intervention. However, there is a dearth of research to inform the development of this work and the potential ways in which digital services could intensify difficulties faced by vulnerable people.

In this study funded by the Nuffield Foundation, we are working closely with the Central England Law Centre and Law for Life, as well as a group of seven local organisations ('trusted intermediaries') in Coventry, to conduct a local, qualitative legal needs study focused on the experiences of marginalised groups. This will be followed by a public legal education project developed with and for the participating organisations, drawing on the findings of the legal needs research and designed to tackle issues identified in the study.

LinC Internships Summer 2022

Warwick LinC was able to offer five paid internships during Summer 2022. Student internships have allowed many of our students to gain vital practical experience of in-depth project work which is crucial to their personal development and their career aspirations. To be eligible to apply for our LinC internships, students must have volunteered for LinC at some point during their studies. Internships are part-time (c. 18 hours a week) and we offer internships of varying lengths; a minimum of six weeks and a maximum of 12 weeks

Summer 2022 LinC Internships

Strategic Public Law Internship (Central England Law Centre)

The intern worked alongside the CELC's Public Law Strategic Development Lead to maximise the impact of work done by LinC's Strategic Public Law Clinic in 2021/22. Building on the primary research work completed by students in the 'Rights in Food Justice' project, the intern undertook further research tasks and analysis. The intern contributed significantly to the drafting of a report based upon this research.

Public Law Team Internship (Central England Law Centre)

The intern worked to prepare 'case stories' from examples of successful work carried out by the Public Law Team at the CELC to illustrate how the law can be used to tackle everyday injustices. The intern analysed key case documents and correspondence, the associated legal framework and drafted the case stories on this basis. They undertook phone calls with previous clients to capture their personal experiences and incorporated these into the case stories.

Immigration and Asylum Internship (Central England Law Centre)

The intern worked with the Immigration and Asylum team to assist with all aspects of their work. This included taking instructions from clients, drafting correspondence, conducting legal and country information research and supporting with administrative tasks. The intern was also able to work on a specific project related to the housing of asylum seekers in a local Warwickshire hotel. The intern conducted guided research into what legal support residents have access to and what provisions are in place in terms of the standard of accommodation for residents. The intern interviewed hotel residents, collaborated with other organisations (e.g. Warwickshire Council/Refugee Action), and drafted a report based upon these findings.

Coventry Independent Advice Service Internship (Coventry Independent Advice Service)

The intern worked alongside CIAS caseworkers at local 'social supermarkets' to provide clients with support with Personal Independence Payment claims, mandatory reconsideration applications, appeals and wider support with applying for various charity grants and the household support fund. The intern was able to build a wide-ranging knowledge of the various forms of support available to clients facing financial hardship and was able to utilise key skills to provide assistance throughout the process.

Legal Information, Research and Evaluation Internship (Law for Life: The Foundation for Public Legal Education)

The intern worked alongside the legal information team and the research team at Law for Life to undertake a range of research tasks in addition to advanced administrative tasks on a number of ongoing Law for Life research projects. For example, on one project, the intern carried out desk research that made a significant contribution towards a feasibility study into the provision of services to people with employment law issues. This included analysing Employment Tribunal statistics, National Tribunal Group meeting data and quarterly information from LSLIP grantees delivering services to clients with employment law issues.

“ Feedback: What our Interns say

Our Summer 2022 LinC Interns provided us with overwhelmingly positive feedback about their experiences. Below are some of the comments they made about their summer internship experiences:

I enjoyed the **independence of being trusted** to complete tasks without constant monitoring. I felt fully supported. I developed **legal skills such as drafting and undertaking interviews**. The work was appropriate and sufficiently challenging.

I gained a **better understanding of the legal profession** outside of commercial law and in an area of law I am interested in. Completing the internship has opened my eyes to a **more interesting and impactful way of practising law**.

I really enjoyed my internship and I feel like I gained a lot! I also really appreciate that it was well-paid.

The main skills I developed were the ability to pay **attention to detail** and my **research skills** as a lot of my tasks required close attention to small changes in information. I also did a lot of sifting through information to gather relevant data. The tasks given were appropriate to my skill level and sufficiently challenging.

The most valuable part of my experience was being involved in the staff meetings and seeing how everyone works behind the scenes and learning about the work everyone is doing.

Learning about the advice sector as a whole was extremely valuable. **My experience was really positive.**

I collaborated with a research lead on the drafting of a report. I developed **key skills in report drafting** and in picking up and navigating a project with which I was not familiar mid-stream.

The feedback I received was **positive and supportive**, and the project lead was knowledgeable, kind and inspiring to work with! I really enjoyed the opportunity to work with an expert in the field, who has significant experience of delivering these kinds of projects. I learned a lot by working in collaboration with them, and watching the project take shape under their guidance. I was also very pleased to have been able to **contribute to such an impactful and significant project** over the course of the internship.

I found meeting the staff at the law centre, and the opportunity to gain insight into the kinds of work that they do incredibly valuable.

By completing case notes and applications for grants I have certainly **developed my legal drafting and written advocacy skills**. I have learnt how to summarise key facts into comprehensive paragraphs to aid other workers to understand the advice that had been given. I have also developed valuable **client communication**.

I have enhanced my ability to communicate with vulnerable clients and express compassion and empathy. I have enriched skills to be able to explain complex process and policies to clients who have limited knowledge of the law or welfare rights

It was very valuable to be able to **gain legal experience in the advice sector** whilst completing work that gave back to the local community.

Feedback from the organisations that hosted our summer 2022 LinC interns was also extremely positive:

- [Working with a LinC intern was] very enjoyable and a **great resource to the organisation**.
- The experience of [working with a LinC intern was] **overwhelmingly positive and productive**.
- The experience was **very positive**. [The intern] was clearly well prepared and showed interest and enthusiasm.
- We were very appreciative of [the intern's] contribution.
- We appreciated **all the hard work that the Law School did** to make the internship **a success**.
- The case stories prepared by the intern are a great contribution to [our] work and give us great material to use to deliver our message. We aim to incorporate these into our website and other communications. Given other pressures and restrictions **this is work that we normally do not have the opportunity to do**.

“ Feedback: What our student volunteers say

Response rates for student feedback (for online feedback forms) were: 60% for I&A Clinic and 50% for SPLC projects. We know from what students have told us in final project meetings that they have had a positive experience participating in the wide range of opportunities we have offered in 2021/22.

Strategic Public Law Clinic

Immigration and Asylum Clinic

Developing skills for future careers

working within a small group as well as the larger project group, has helped me to improve my **communication and teamwork skills**. I have also developed my **presentation, analysis and critical thinking skills**. I have developed new skills, working on things that I have not done before, e.g. transcription and interviewing.

It has definitely helped **improve my confidence** in working with new people. There has been a lot of communicating and fitting things into my schedule, which has definitely improved much more now.

Working as a team, especially remotely and with others who may have different strengths/expertise across different year groups and disciplines.

I have gained **researching skills** both inside and beyond the scope of law. Also, data gathering and analytical skills were gained.

Developed my research skills, **improved my scheduling and organisation**, and developed my knowledge of the wider context surrounding public law.

I really enjoyed the presentation at the end and being able to collate and present my findings. This was beneficial for **my confidence in public speaking** and allowed me to summarise all the work done over the two terms.

My involvement in the clinic enhanced my **client communication skills** immensely. By assisting with ECF applications and volunteering with KIND [Kids in Need of Defense], I was provided with the first experience of communicating with clients, a skill that will immensely **benefit my future studies and career**.

Providing real advice to real clients has helped me improve my **communication skills**. Working in a team with my partner has improved my ability to work as part of a team.

I have improved my **team working and client communication skills**. In addition I have learnt how to fill out certain forms and have developed **administration skills**. The most challenging thing is the responsibility provided, you are entrusted with many independent tasks so it may seem challenging, however I was able to overcome this and **increase my confidence**.

Enhancing knowledge and understanding of public law and social justice

I have a **greater sense of social justice**. I also have had a taster of what it could be like working in public law, thanks to the opportunity of seeing it through the eyes of those who do work in it.

I feel like I gained a more **in-depth understanding of the area of public law** my project was based on which I otherwise wouldn't have. I also learnt how organisations like the Law Centre operate in this area of law and social justice, which was **helpful in informing future career choices**.

I think one of the core successes of the project was that it offered lots of insight into **how public law works in practice**, and how public law practitioners go about their work.

I previously had no knowledge of Immigration and Asylum regulations, but through the help of the supervisors, I have become **familiar with the statutory provisions, and how they operate practically**.

I became **more knowledgeable in refugee and asylum law**. Looking at the evidence from our clients and filling in forms has definitely enhanced my analytical skills.

A positive experience

I personally really enjoyed working with Tara and Karen. They were both very **professional, accommodating, and respectful** of every volunteer's time. I especially feel they were superb at making sure everyone was on the same page in terms of the relevant law/policy, irrespective of experience or discipline.

I'd like to thank the staff at CELC and the University who organised and facilitated the project - there was clearly a great deal of work and passion going into the project, against what were still inclement circumstances this year. Thank you for **supporting us and offering us the opportunities to participate**.

Developing FOI requests and **learning to think practically** rather than just in an abstract, academic way

I would like to highlight the **amazing experience** I was able to participate in, volunteering with KIND UK. I intend to continue this and have thoroughly enjoyed my time spent volunteering.

My first time alone with a client I thought would be challenging, but the trust shown by my supervisor and their helpful tips really **empowered me** in having a smooth first client-meeting.

I really appreciated the face-to-face experience we had with clients and service seekers. It established a human connection, making the **work feel more vital and rewarding**.

