

CRIMINAL LAW ARTICLE



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One Bar: Threats, Opportunities and Strengths in an Age of Change

We attended the Annual Bar and Young Bar Conference held in London on 4th November 2017.

The pervading message was positivity in the face of change. Lady Justice Hallett reminded us that the profession has shown the ability to survive and thrive in spite of many challenges. Sir Keir Starmer QC MP encouraged the legal profession to help shape the future in a world which is at a crossroads of change.

There was also a distinct focus on technology. Susan Acland-Hood, CEO of HMCTS, outlined the new 'online routes' to justice. Professor Richard Susskind provided a fascinating insight into the future of AI and his view that the young Bar should build with rather than compete against it.

Other inspirational highlights included [Andrew Langdon QC's rousing keynote address](#) and [Sir Henry Brooke on the LASPO Review](#) for which he received a well-deserved standing ovation.

The conference celebrated success in and around the profession, including the following:

The Bar Pro Bono Award: Tanya Murshed, 1 Mitre Court Buildings, for working with vulnerable individuals convicted of capital offences to secure sentence reviews in the High Court of Uganda.

Legal Reporting Awards: Melanie Phillips, '[A Cruel and Ignorant Campaign](#)' on the Charlie Gard case and Radio 4's Zoe Conway for her reports on Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) sentences, including coverage of the James Ward case.

Wellbeing Certificates of Recognition: Awarded to 29 organisations, including Inns of Courts and Western Circuit chambers, for their contribution to the '[Wellbeing at the Bar](#)' initiative.

We also attended specialist sessions which provided practical advice for developing your practice and discussed common ethical problems and solutions at the Young Bar. The Bar Council later launched its new '[Ethics & Practice Hub](#)' which includes subsections for crime, family and civil practitioners.

We tweeted live updates throughout the day **@altheabrooks80** and you can join the debate at **#onebar2017**. We thoroughly enjoyed the conference and commend it to all practising and future barristers.

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