

A message from Laura Coyle, Co-chair

As many colleagues will already be aware, Simon Mullings, until very recently a co-chair of HLPA, tragically passed away at the weekend following an accident while on holiday.

Hammersmith and Fulham Law Centre, where he led the housing team, have released a statement which can be viewed here -[https://hflaw.org.uk/](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Furldefense.com%2Fv3%2F__https%3A%2F%2Fhflaw.org.uk%2F__%3B!!P0kYq-wz9Q!TDKvMBsLyD5A5f0g238BJV8NQH2gpmbx08dqsoypgBq3UwhQm5VIHcLd4FLbq1vrB8492OU0tgyuENh9IirW8uyLnOE%24&data=05%7C02%7CChandra_Rao%40shelter.org.uk%7C1af7e54ce188466b15a508dccc13c948%7C2b002080e07f4fa4965354bf7c64c2ab%7C0%7C0%7C638609632615866111%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=MgdD9ntTJsQWEEuDRPY5W6LtP9jxvdC4EkatQHoLlo4%3D&reserved=0)

This horrific news will shock and deeply sadden all of those who had the immense privilege and pleasure of knowing and working with Simon. Many of us are no doubt still trying to come to terms to with the news that he is no longer with us, it is hard to take in.

It is difficult to know where to begin in paying tribute to Simon. HLPA and the housing legal aid sector will forever be in his debt for the incredible hard work and dedication he put in as co-chair of HLPA for four difficult years, mostly at the height of the pandemic, from 2020-24. During this time, he worked on numerous campaigns and initiatives, including the successful resistance to the introduction of Fixed Recoverable Costs, the Renters (Reform) Bill, the sector’s response to the pandemic, as well as Early Advice pilots and the development and understanding of HLPAS. A hugely entertaining and vibrant speaker, he spoke at numerous conferences and training sessions and All-Party Parliamentary Group meetings, attended party conferences and meetings with government and court officials and generally played an enormously significant role both as a mentor to others in the sector and as an ambassador for housing legal aid, highlighting to the wider world the importance of access to housing legal justice for all – a subject which he cared so passionately about.

Many will recall that in 2020 Simon won a LALY in the Social Welfare Law category for his contribution to social welfare law. The ceremony was held remotely due to the pandemic, and he appeared on the screen framed by his guitar collection and complete with birthday hat and cake as the ceremony took place on his birthday. His acceptance speech was the highlight of the ceremony.

Simon was a formidably intelligent, driven man, a force of nature and a true great. But above all, and what always shone through, was his goodness, compassion and humour. We will all miss him more than we can say.

Our thoughts and deepest sympathy are with Simon’s family at this incredibly sad time. If members would like to send a message of support to his family then please do send to Chandra Chandra\_Rao@shelter.org.uk and she will collate and pass on.

Yours in great sadness

**Laura Coyle**

Co-chair

HLPA Executive Committee