



13th June 2016

For Immediate Release

A record breaking year for the Southampton Legal Walk

2nd sponsored Southampton Legal Walk raises over £5,500 for free local legal help

On Monday 9 May, just under 150 lawyers, advisors and other legal professionals joined forces for a sponsored walk around the sights of Southampton to raise over £5,500 to support free legal advice in Southampton and throughout the south west.

Under the banner 'Supporting access to justice in the South West' 22 teams of walkers from law firms, barristers' chambers as well as the voluntary and advice sector came together to raise funds for the South West Legal Support Trust (SWLST) and other local free legal advice charities. Walkers were joined by District Judge Sparrow; the Law Society of England and Wales's Vice President, Robert Bourns; President of the Hampshire Law Society, Matthew Robbins and Joint Chair of the South Hampshire JLD, Amy Stamp.

South West Legal Support Trust
020 7092 3973 www.swlst.org.uk enquiries@swlst.org.uk

The South West Legal Support Trust is a company limited by guarantee (No. 07539121) and a registered charity (No. 1141830), registered office c/o Dutton Gregory, 48-50 Parkstone Road, Poole BH15 2PG.



The 10km route took in the lovely parks the city had to offer, with many walkers remarking they saw a side to the city they hadn't seen before. The weather was fine and breezy; a perfect spring day to stride out and raise money for a vital cause.

Walkers taking part fundraised for the cause by seeking sponsorship and in addition to this the event was supported by sponsors Dutton Gregory, who hosted the welcoming finishing line reception, gratefully received by thirsty walkers.

Alongside some well-deserved refreshments walkers were welcomed back by the lead walkers who spoke about the growing importance of continuing free legal advice and support for the free legal advice sector and individuals who rely on their services.

The event is run by the South West Legal Support Trust (SWLST). The SWLST was formed in 2010 to raise and distribute funds to support the provision of free legal advice in Southampton and throughout the South West to those who otherwise would not be able to afford it. It is part of a network of Legal Support Trusts, working with the Access to Justice Foundation, to facilitate the access to specialist legal advice for the poorest and most vulnerable people in the community.

The organisations supported by the event make a huge difference in the lives of many people. The recent cuts to civil legal aid have not only affected the legal profession, but have also drastically impacted the services provided to members of the public.

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Southampton Citizens Advice Bureau (Southampton CAB) is a local charity which provides a range of free legal advice and support in and around Southampton to some of the city's most vulnerable citizens who often seek their services as a desperate last resort. In addition to using the Southampton Legal Walk to fundraise directly to support their work, Southampton CAB also benefit from grant funding from the SWLST and when services are as stretched and under resourced as they are in the advice sector, every little bit does make a huge difference.

Cuts to legal aid and local government funding of advice services means charities such as these are fighting to survive. Some organisations have merged, meaning already tight resources are being stretched over greater distances, but more frequently, others have ceased to provide services altogether.

A representative from the SWLST said "We are truly delighted that the Southampton Legal Walk has had a record breaking year with more people coming out to support access to justice for the most vulnerable and more funds being raised to support the vital services when help these people in their time of need. Thanks to all our walkers, supporters and sponsors the SWLST will be able to make more and larger grants than ever before, ensuring local services benefit from local support.

More information about the SWLST and South West Legal Walk, including all the pictures from the event can be found on the SWLST website at <http://www.swlst.org.uk/southampton-legal-walk.html>

You can find the event on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/South-West-Legal-Support-Trust-174023026111687/>) or by using the hashtag #legalwalk, you can also follow the Trust on Twitter [@SouthWestLST](https://twitter.com/SouthWestLST).

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Notes

- The South West Legal Support Trust (the Trust) is part of a nationwide group of 8 other Regional Legal Support Trusts set up under the guidance of the Access to Justice Foundation across England and Wales to support the provision of pro bono legal advice through grants, fund raising and other help.
- The Southampton Legal Walk is a sponsored event which engages the local legal profession, advice sector and public in promoting access to justice. More information can be found at <http://www.swlst.org.uk/southampton-legal-walk.html>
- For more information about the Access to Justice Foundation see its website at <http://www.atjf.org.uk/> or contact Martha de la Roche by email marthadelaroch@atjf.org.uk or phone 020 7092 3973.
- For more information about the South West Legal Support Trust see its website at <http://www.swlst.org.uk/> or contact the Trust by email enquiries@swlst.org.uk.

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