Blind Justice

PRESS BRIEFING

NOT FIT FOR PURPOSE

‘I was left destitute by my solicitors, yet the SRA says nothing to see here!’

A woman says she lost everything after trusting her solicitors. When she complained to the regulator responsible for protecting the public, it apologised and reopened her case, only to close it again. Now a charity is demanding that Parliament replace the watchdog after forcing it to admit serious failings in a separate case.

The woman had turned to solicitors for help with a legal dispute. Her only substantial asset was the family home. She says her solicitors, knowing this, introduced litigation funding arrangements secured against that home while further borrowing involving her ex-husband was also taking place, and that the conflict between their financial interests and hers was allowed to run its course. The equity in her home was consumed by debts and lending arrangements, some of which she says she neither authorised nor benefited from. She says she was left destitute.

She complained to the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA), the body responsible for regulating solicitors in England and Wales. The regulator later reopened her report and apologised. But it closed the matter again, without answering questions it had itself raised.

Her experience is among those examined by Blind Justice UK, a charity supporting people who face the justice system without a lawyer.

In another case, a mother and her son reported concerns about money held in his childhood trust fund. They alleged that the money was being used to finance litigation against the mother as part of a pattern of domestic abuse. The SRA closed the report without speaking to either of them, describing it as a ‘contentious dispute’ about money.

These are allegations made by the people concerned. No finding of misconduct against the solicitors involved is asserted.

For the people who contacted Blind Justice, the consequences have been personal, financial and sometimes devastating. The charity says their experiences expose a fundamental question: who protects members of the public when the body responsible for regulating solicitors fails to examine their concerns properly?

A regulator forced to admit its own failings

On the 22nd of October 2026, the SRA admitted serious failings in its handling of a separate complaint brought to its attention by Blind Justice UK.

Following the charity’s threat of judicial review, the regulator acknowledged that it had treated the report too narrowly, that its enquiries had not been detailed enough and that it had not given sufficient reasons for its decision. It withdrew both decisions and agreed to reconsider the case using a new decision maker. The admission came only after Blind Justice threatened legal proceedings.

More than 10,000 reports closed without further action

The SRA's own figures for 2024/25 show that it closed 10,382 reports without further action at the assessment stage, 72 per cent of the 14,420 reports it dealt with. Fewer than one in five were referred for investigation.

Not every closed report will have been wrongly handled. But Blind Justice says the public has no effective independent right to challenge an SRA decision not to investigate, even where the decision may have been made without adequate enquiries.

In the last two months nearly 100 people have approached the charity, and the number coming forward has risen sharply since the SRA's admission. The charity has also received approaches from people working within the legal profession, congratulating it on its challenge, offering their assistance and reporting considerable concerns of their own about the SRA.

'We should not have to threaten court proceedings to make a regulator do its job'

Edward Romain ACILEX, Founder and CEO of Blind Justice UK, said:

'When someone has lost their money, their home or their ability to fight a legal case, being told that the regulator sees no reason to investigate can be devastating.

'These are people who have already suffered. They have turned to the organisation that is supposed to protect them, often as their last hope of getting someone to listen.

'In our own case, the SRA admitted serious failings only after we threatened judicial review. Most people cannot afford to do that.

'What has been particularly revealing is the reaction from within the legal profession. Since the SRA backed down, people working in the profession have contacted us to congratulate us, offer their assistance and raise considerable concerns of their own.

'We believe the SRA is not fit for purpose. We want an independent examination of the thousands of complaints it closes, a proper right of review for the public, and a regulator that answers to Parliament rather than leaving individuals to fight for accountability themselves.'

Georgina Halford-Hall, CEO of WhistleblowersUK, said:

'Time and again the public becomes the victim not only of the criminal and unethical conduct of regulated individuals, which is a scandal in its own right. What this report exposes is the bigger scandal hiding in plain sight: the failure of the regulator to regulate. WhistleblowersUK is alarmed by the conduct of the SRA and its dismissal of serious concerns, including reports of the loss of client money. This report shines a light on the facts, and calls on the SRA to work with the author and WhistleblowersUK to take a fresh look at these complaints and prevent further miscarriages of justice. It is time for all regulators to end the practice of marking their own homework, and to back calls for an Office of the Whistleblower.'

Calls for Parliament to intervene

In its new paper, Not Fit for Purpose: why Parliament must rebuild the regulation of solicitors, Blind Justice UK calls for an independent audit of complaints closed without investigation, a statutory right for the public to challenge regulatory decisions, and the replacement of the existing regulatory structure with a single regulator independent of the profession and government. The charity is seeking parliamentary scrutiny of the regulator's handling of public complaints and its accountability.

Interviews and supporting evidence

Blind Justice UK can provide supporting regulatory correspondence and research findings, subject to appropriate redactions. Interviews with affected individuals may be arranged with their informed consent. Edward Romain ACILEX, Founder and CEO of Blind Justice UK, is available for television, radio and press interviews.

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